

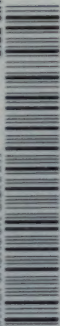
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ALICE OTTLEY



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Walter L. Colls. Sc

Ever dear children
Yours very affecte
Alice Otley

(1897.)

ALICE OTTLEY

FIRST HEAD-MISTRESS OF THE
WORCESTER HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

1883-1912

COMPILED BY

MARY E. JAMES

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE
BISHOP OF WORCESTER

Candida Rectaque

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

9 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK, BOMBAY, AND CALCUTTA

1914

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“ Their examples reach a hand
Far thro' all years, and everywhere they meet
And kindle generous purpose, and the strength
To mould it into action pure as theirs.”

TENNYSON, *Tiresias*.

TO
HER SISTER,
HER FELLOW-WORKERS, AND
HER "CHILDREN"

All Saints Tide, 1913.

INTRODUCTION

“ WE thank God for the blessing He conferred on this city when He gave us Alice Ottley.” These were the words spoken in Worcester Cathedral by one of the Canons at the time of her death, and it is this gift to Worcester which makes appropriate the request that I, as Bishop, should write some words of preface to her memoir.

I find it difficult to choose which of three thoughts should come first—what she herself was, what she did for the School, or what her influence was ; but the first governs the rest. Alice Ottley seems all her life long to have dreamed of God. As a child at Richmond, when she gazed out on the stars from her room, or in middle life when, writing from Switzerland, she spoke of the snow mountains reminding her of the slow unravelling of God’s eternal purpose for us and the Church, it was the same lofty spirit which yearned forth to all that was noble and pure, because in those things it saw God.

In such a nature the best sort of evangelical training found ample scope ; it seems to have given to her what that training often gives, a quiet, deep sense of personal relationship and trust between the Redeemer and the redeemed. Then came the influence of Keble’s *Christian Year* and Isaac Williams’ *Baptistery*, and finally the strong, full teaching of Cleaver of St. Mary Magdalene’s. She herself speaks of Mr. Cleaver in words which may

well be applied to herself in later years : " Wonderful as was his power of sympathy, and delightful the sense of pure fun which sparkled through his deep seriousness, it was impossible to forget that other Presence in which he lived " ; and we can understand what was said of her by one who knew her at Oxford, when she temporarily took Miss Benson's place : " They saw, without defining it, something in her which was above and beyond intellect and natural sweetness "—they saw in her " a saint."

Had she lived in the Middle Ages, although her strong common sense would have rejected some of the forms of enthusiasm of the convent, she might have ranked with the makers of women's religious life ; for, in addition to her deep devotion, she had, as Canon Ottley points out, the gifts which make " an energetic, forceful, and resolute character, capable of great endurance, of steady persistence under difficulties, and of that ' inward patience ' which is content to bear what each minute brings and to fulfil wholeheartedly the task which lies immediately ahead."

Such was the remarkable lady whom Canon Butler found, on the recommendation of Miss Bishop, and brought to Worcester in 1883. With diffidence she came ; and with those forces which faith and diffidence lend to an active purposeful character, she caused the High School to spring into life. By 1885 she had a hundred and twenty-five pupils.

No doubt one element in her success was the devotion which her staff felt for her, with their simple trust in her judgment. But another was her absolute refusal to trim her principles for the sake of popularity. She knew what she believed and Whom she believed, and her definite teaching was, as Canon Claughton has well said, " the outcome of her own firm conviction and

unfaltering faith, watered by her self-sacrificing love for souls, enforced by the example of her own consistent life," and it "bore fruit abundantly in hundreds of other lives."

It was not only among Churchmen that her qualities were recognised. Mr. Simes, whose work as Chairman of the Education Committee of the Worcester City Council gave him the right to speak, and who is himself a Nonconformist, said: "Her supreme anxiety was that the girlhood of the city should have the best. It was this loftiness of aim, this devout passion for the highest interests of all, that gave her the unique position which she occupied amongst us." And along with this may be placed the reminiscence of one of her old girls, who said: "My abiding recollection is of one in whose presence I felt not only the desire to be my best self, but that best self indeed."

Thus Miss Ottley laboured on for just upon thirty years, giving to Worcester and the Diocese, and to a wider circle still, a generation of women in whom she evoked the best and highest aspirations of womanhood, and to whom she taught the lesson, that all those powers which we to-day see women possess with increasing consciousness, can be fulfilled, and fulfilled the more nobly, when pervaded by the grace of Jesus Christ.

She died, as she wished to die, in harness, on the very day fixed for the assembly of her School under her successor, and her career showed forth this, that a life devoted, in the simplest way, to the fulfilment of God's will, can be, even in the eyes of a careless world, a success which the world can recognise.

HUYSHE WORCESTER.

PREFATORY NOTE

IN sending forth this record of the life and work of Alice Ottley, foundress of the Worcester High School for Girls and its ruler for over twenty-nine years, I wish to acknowledge my sense of indebtedness to the many friends without whose aid the task would have been an impossible one.

For the contents of Chapters I and II, relating the story of Miss Ottley's earlier life, those forty-three years during which she was being gradually prepared to take up her life-work at Worcester, I am indebted to her sister, Miss C. A. Ottley, to her old friend, Miss A. M. Hitchcock, whose "recollections" form so important a part of Chapter II, and to other friends and former pupils of hers at Hampstead and Brondesbury. Of her numerous Worcester friends—members of her staff, "Old Girls" and others—who have entrusted me with valued letters and sent me reminiscences, I should like especially to mention Miss Bagnall, a mistress at the High School from 1886 to 1904, who is entirely responsible for Chapters VI and VIII and gave much help besides, Miss Wight, an "Old Girl," who did some copying and also reproduced photographs for some of the illustrations, and Miss Boulton, a Canadian lady, who furnished me with Miss Ottley's share of a correspondence of twenty years. I am also indebted to Dr. R. L. Ottley, not only for the "recollections" of his sister which will be found at the close of Chapter

IX, but for assistance in the way of criticism, revision and correction of the proof-sheets. Last, but not least, I would acknowledge the great kindness of the Bishop of Worcester, who, amid the pressure of his work, has found time to write an introduction.

To us all it has been a labour of love, and a privilege to help in however small a degree to perpetuate the memory of one, the key-note of whose whole life was "service"—eager, joyous service of the Master to Whom as a child she gave herself, and in Whom she served not only His little ones, in the great cause of religious education to which her life was devoted, but every single soul with whom she came in contact.

M. E. J.

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ALICE OTTLEY

CHAPTER I

EARLY YEARS. 1840-1861

"Light are their steps, who in life's earliest dawn
The mountain-tops of heavenly life ascend,
Brushing the dew-drops from the spangled lawn ;
Nor ever from the straighter path descend,
Fixing their eyes upon their journey's end ;
Sweetest, best thoughts are theirs, such as have striven
With childhood, and with dawning conscience blend,
To flee all other love but that of heaven,
Ere weigh'd to earth with sin, and much to be forgiven."

ISAAC WILLIAMS, *The Baptistry*.

ALICE OTTLEY was descended from an ancient Shropshire family. She was born at the small but picturesque vicarage of Acton, a remote village in Suffolk, on March 23, 1840.

It must have been about the year 1832 that her father, Lawrence Ottley, the eldest son of Sir Richard Ottley, Chief Justice of Ceylon, came to Acton to read for Holy Orders with the Rev. John Bickersteth, the vicar of the parish. Mr. Bickersteth was a widower, and his eldest daughter, Elizabeth, was "finishing her education" at a well-known ladies' school at Cheltenham. Lawrence was clever and good-looking, and had inherited a certain delightful charm of manner which made him a favourite everywhere, and when, in the

following year, Elizabeth came home from school to keep house for her father, a strong attachment quickly sprang up between the two. The engagement was welcomed by Mr. Bickersteth, who saw in his pupil¹ of gentle birth and manners one to whom he could safely entrust his daughter, and in 1835 the young bride of eighteen, with her husband, now ordained, went to Meole Brace in Shropshire, where he held his first curacy under Archdeacon Bather. Here passed the first happy year and a half of their married life, and here their first child, a daughter, was born.

In 1837, when Mr. Bickersteth was presented to the living of Sapcote in Leicestershire, Mr. Ottley returned to Acton as vicar, and here six more daughters and three sons were born.

Alice was the fourth of the family, of whom two—Portia, the third, and Richard, sixth child and eldest son—died in infancy.

Among the stories with which, in after years, Alice used to delight her "children," two date from Acton days. One, a particularly thrilling one, was of a ferocious-looking gipsy, who, one Sunday evening while her father and mother were in church and only a nursemaid was left in charge, made an attempt to rob the house and to carry off her baby-sister. The other related to an adventure of her own, at the age of five. She had been spending a few days at a neighbouring vicarage, and had made great friends there with a certain little "Betty," aged four. When the day came for her to return home, both she and Betty were nowhere to be found. They had "run away," and, with the help of a favourite dog, were at last discovered, footsore and

¹ Among Mr. Bickersteth's pupils were John Pelham, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, and Henry Alford, afterwards Dean of Canterbury.

weary, having trudged along a dusty road for four miles.

Few other records are left of the life at Acton, but from allusions in a diary kept by Alice for some months of the year 1854, it is evident that the childhood there was a happy one, and that valued and enduring friendships were made.

In 1850, when Alice was ten years old, Mr. Ottley was appointed rector of Richmond in Yorkshire, and thus Richmond became for her the "old home," rich in tender memories and associations, the home in which she unconsciously fulfilled that ideal of hers for a home-daughter and elder sister, which became so familiar to her Worcester "children."

Here were born four more sons and one daughter.

The family at Richmond divided itself into three groups: at the head, the two eldest daughters, Sarah and Emily, the death of Portia having separated them from the rest; next, Alice and Bessie; and last, after another break left by the death of the little Richard, "the children."

Alice and Bessie, at the age of twelve and eleven, were a striking pair. Bessie, dark, with finely-modelled features, eyes of a deep violet hue, dark-brown hair, and bright colour, was a marked contrast to Alice, with her golden ringlets, clear blue eyes, and fair complexion. They were wiry and strong, though slight in figure and somewhat fragile-looking, and so nearly of a size as often to be taken for twin-sisters: and indeed like twins they were in their devotion to each other.

High-spirited and full of fun, they were the leaders in many a youthful escapade, climbing trees, racing over the moor, hiding among the rocks, or bounding across the stepping-stones of the river Swale, on the left bank of which the old town is situated. The Richmond

rectory of those days was a long, low, old house, full of quaint corners and cupboards, which provided ample opportunity for hide-and-seek and other such games. So lively were the children, and so adventurous in their play, that their uncle, Robert Bickersteth,¹ is said to have returned from an expedition with them to the moor one day, exclaiming: "These children will turn my hair grey; save me from ever taking them for a walk again!"

But it is evident from Alice's diary, which displays unusual command of language for a girl of thirteen, that beneath her high spirits lay concealed a vein of deep seriousness, a thoughtfulness beyond her years. All beauty, especially the beauty of Nature, appealed strongly to her child-mind, and very early awoke in her a deep sense of the Presence of God. She never tired of watching the lights and shadows flitting across the exquisite landscape southward and eastward of the rectory garden, and on clear nights she would peep out of her window before getting into bed, and revel in the moonlight and the stars, many of which she already knew by name; and for her, even then, "the heavens declared the glory of God."

Those who are familiar with that part of Yorkshire know well the attractiveness of Swaledale, its heather, its stretches of wild moorland, its mountain streams which swell the river Swale. The town of Richmond is one of rare interest and beauty, with its noble castle on the hill, the wooded cliffs descending sheer down to the winding stream below, the picturesque bridge over the river, and, away to the left, the woods of Easby, beautiful in light and shadow alike and at all times of the year. Rich in birds too, and in wild flowers, the country round Richmond was a continual delight to

¹ Afterwards Bishop of Ripon.



Photo: Frith & Co., Ltd.

RICHMOND RAILWAY BRIDGE AND CASTLE

the sisters, who learnt early to take pleasure in making sketches of their favourite haunts, and carefully pressing, or better still, perhaps, painting, the wild flowers gathered in their rambles.

Mrs. McKenzie,¹ a daughter of the Rev. C. Porter, then vicar of Grinton in Swaledale, about ten miles from Richmond, recalls how, one glorious autumn day of 1852, when Mr. and Mrs. Ottley and Alice joined her and her family in an expedition to Bolton Castle, "that little fairy form skipped about those romantic ruins, which impressed their sad tale upon her intelligent mind." She remembers, too, how, in walking up the hill on the wild moor, the little shy Alice slipped her hand confidingly into hers, and they became at once fast friends—a true friendship that was to last sixty years.

The atmosphere of the home was a deeply religious one. The intense spirituality, the reverent humility of the father, the mother's earnest devotion to holy things, (both had been nurtured in the best traditions of the Evangelical movement), awakened a ready response in the hearts of the children. Mrs. Ottley, always delicate, did not, as a rule, breakfast downstairs, and thus it was with their father that the day began. Morning by morning, punctually at eight o'clock, they assembled in his study for family prayers, and then, in the ten minutes' pause before breakfast, they would cluster round his knee, and, word by word, spell out some passage of the Greek Testament, which, with utmost simplicity of language, he would translate and make clear to their childish minds. Their lessons were under the direction of a governess, but the interest in these, as in all else, was shared to the full by their parents, whose slightest wish was law, (for their rule, though loving, was extremely firm), and who were happy in

¹ Widow of Bishop Douglas McKenzie of Zululand.

possessing the entire confidence of their children. Not even the occasional storms, inevitable among high-spirited and intelligent girls and boys, could long disturb the spirit of love and peace which prevailed throughout the household.

Sunday, the strict old-fashioned Sunday, with its church services, and, for the elder girls, its Sunday-school teaching, brought a special happiness of its own, Sunday-books—biographies and stories of the Saints—gave real pleasure ; *The Baptistery* was a great favourite with Alice and Bessie. Each child, when old enough, kept a sermon-book, in which, Sunday by Sunday, were recorded the names of the preachers, the texts of their sermons, and often also the substance of the morning sermon. Characteristic criticisms of the sermons which she heard appear in Alice's diary. She especially delighted in her father's preaching, and her eager spirit, always ready to acquire knowledge, readily drank in and appropriated the teaching heard from his lips. Another Sunday custom was that of gathering round their mother at the piano in the afternoon and singing *Narrative Hymns* together, while after tea they would stand up in turn and recite to both parents some hymn or poem : " a delightful memory," says Mrs. McKenzie, who was often present, " for they all recited beautifully." The Church Catechism was, of course, instilled into all the children from their earliest years ; long passages of the Bible and many of the Psalms were also committed to memory by the elder girls, and it is interesting to find Alice, one Sunday evening, telling " Aggie and Hennie the stories of Jael and Sisera and Samson,"¹ characters which she afterwards made so living to her " babies " in the kindergarten at Worcester. Forcible outbursts of righteous indignation at sin and

¹ From her diary.

wrong-doing find expression in the pages of her diary. These also show how, even in those early days, she was imbued with the feeling for order and beauty in things connected with religion, especially in the Church and Church services. Already, too, John Keble was playing a part in the forming of her spiritual ideals, as she grew in her appreciation of *The Christian Year*, the poems of which were often chosen by her for Sunday recitation.

The following are extracts from her diary :

"*Saturday, Jan. 21 (1854).*—Upon the whole it has been a happy day. God is very kind to us. I have been reading 1 Corinthians iii. It is too much to be thought of alone. It seems to make sin doubly sinful when it defiles the heart which the Almighty deigns to dwell in. St. Paul says that we are Christ's. I wonder whether I am His in all things. I wish I was more consistent."

"*Sunday, Jan. 22.*—Papa preached this morning, a lovely sermon on Luke vii. 41 to 43, about the love of those whose sins are deeply felt and freely forgiven. Mr. T. preached this evening on Acts xiv. 3, about the evidences of the truths of Scripture. If I had chosen a subject it would have been this one. A most deeply interesting sermon. . . . Bessie, I fear, is very ill."

"*Tuesday, 24.*—The stars were most beautiful. There was one brighter than all the others over the Castle. I thought it was like Christian hope rising in life's dark night over the ruins of earthly hopes and terrestrial joys."

"*Wednesday, 25.*—Papa preached on Numbers xxi. 31: 'Thus Israel dwelt in the land of the Amorites.' A beautiful sermon. He mentioned keeping journals, which made me very glad that I kept one. The last part of the sermon was addressed to doubtful minds who see no hope of ever in this world overcoming the difficulties which surround them. Spoke to F. C. R., who

came to church alone. She told me that H. had a very bad headache. How I should like to watch by and nurse her, but this is not possible. I can, however, pray for her and think of her, and this with all my heart I will do. Our window is open, and I have been looking at the stars. Orion is just opposite and lovely, Venus is shining dazzlingly bright. What a vast idea it gives of the power of God, to think that each sparkling jewel there is the centre of another system all as beautifully and regularly conducted as our own, and that all these are but a very small part of the works of Providence."

"*Wednesday, Feb. 1.*—Went to church. . . . Papa read and Mr. S. preached on 1 Corinthians iii. 11: 'For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.' There is something poetical in his sermons, but they don't come home."

"*Sunday, 5th after Epiphany, Feb. 5.*—Walked with H., who gave me . . . a piece of Keble's poetry sent her by an unknown person. I copied it; it is very beautiful, especially two particular verses about communion in spirit with far-off friends, and the blessing after the sermon. It is very sweet to think that all our beloved, though poor, Acton friends are perhaps at the same moment putting up the same prayer or receiving the same blessing, and that their dear, simple hearts are full of many of the same feelings, perhaps remembering us as we do them in many parts of our beautiful service. I went to church and sat in the rectory pew. Mr. S. preached. I said Keble's hymn for last Sunday; they talked about satyrs and dragons."

"*Sunday, Sexagesima (Feb. 19).*—Papa preached the most beautiful sermon on walking with God. Oh, how delightful it would be to feel that God was one's friend. Death would indeed be welcome and life happy. I taught Miss R.'s class this afternoon. . . . After tea I read that delightful *Baptistery*: it is almost too sweet, too lovely."

Through these weeks a cloud of impending sorrow was casting its shadow over the happy family. Bright, lovely, lovable little Bessie, who had been taken ill at the beginning of the year, was growing worse, and the anxiety about her sister could not but tell on Alice's usually bright spirits.

On February 22 she wrote :

" Never in my life, I think, did I feel so wretched as I have done the last two or three days. Why is it, I wonder ? "

And on February 26 :

" Oh ! it does make one wretched to hear the word ' danger ' from a doctor's mouth. . . . The solemn, quiet majesty of a glorious starlight night generally speaks peace to my mind, but now it only seems to echo the word ' danger. ' "

In those days, possibly because of the stronger realisation that

" All God does, if rightly understood,
Shall work thy final good,"

it was not the custom to hide away all experience of sorrow and suffering from the children of the family. Alice was much in the sick-room during Bessie's illness, and though, during the last fortnight, she and her sister Emily were lovingly cared for in the house of a friend, she paid daily long visits to the rectory, and was present when little Bessie passed away.

Those who have been privileged to read her own record of those sad days, are struck by the maturity of thought, and keen sense of spiritual realities, expressed by the bereaved little sister of not yet fourteen.

On March 3, after the visit of a second doctor who had been called in, she wrote :

" I hoped Dr. S. would clear the subject of Bessie's illness, but he has not in the least, and the cloud of sorrow is thickening and deepening in our formerly happy family. I wish I could more truly say from the bottom of my breaking heart :

' O Lord my God, do Thou Thy holy will,
I will be still.'"

Again, on March 14, the day before the end :

" I am sure God is giving her a special strength and peace. . . . I feel that she is dying, but there is an inexpressible comfort and holy peace in the thought that her thoughts and hopes are fixed upon the other world, whither she is hastening. . . . The pang of parting here will be softened by the hope of meeting there."

And on the 15th, when all was over :

" We were summoned before six o'clock this morning to see Bessie, and stayed with her the greater part of the day. . . . Papa every now and then said a text or a line of a hymn, but she was quite unconscious . . . till five minutes to five this evening, and then her happy, lovely spirit took its wonderful incomprehensible flight. . . . Who can tell the perfect joy and rest and happiness in which she is now ? Oh ! we sorrow not as they which have no hope. . . . She has long ere this realised the joys of heaven ; met Portia and Richard, and seen her Saviour face to face."

And after the funeral, on the 20th :

" The beautiful service was solemnising, calming, comforting. There will be times when life will seem desolate and drear without her, who was with me in

every study, with whom I have so often looked forward to Confirmation and to first Communion, but I would not, if it were possible, call the happy spirit back to its prison of clay, which, lovely as it was, will soon crumble to dust. No, she must not come to us, but we must go to her. It is a link severed on earth to be united with double strength above."

The sorrow of her loneliness, however, and her unselfish endeavour to hide it from those about her, involved a severe strain upon her brave spirit, and soon it was thought well that she should have complete change of scene, and should go away from home for a time.

After some visits with her father and mother and her sister Georgiana, followed by a short interval spent at home in which to get ready, she went, in August of the same year, to a school in London, kept by a former governess in her mother's family, a certain Miss B——.

The first few weeks of school-life seemed very dreary to the home-loving child in her loneliness, but after a time her lessons began to prove of absorbing interest, and such was her progress by the end of the school-year, that her parents decided to let their two elder daughters, Sarah and Emily, return with her to school after the holidays, to share her educational advantages. No sooner had they arrived, however, than, for some unknown reason, Miss B—— appeared to take a strong dislike to all three, and they suffered in ways that would hardly seem credible, had they not been described by Alice herself.

They endured these petty persecutions for several months, their lessons and lectures forming some kind of compensation, till, in February 1856, matters reached a climax, and Mr. Ottley, accompanied by his aunt, Miss Betsy Ottley, an old lady of shrewd sense and strong character, travelled down from Richmond,

bearded Miss B—— in her den, and insisted on removing his daughters there and then. It is said that during this interview, which must have been a painful one, Aunt Betsy rose to her feet, and shaking her fist sternly in the face of this tyrant in petticoats, said slowly and with great emphasis, “Miss B——, you—are—a—very—wicked—woman!”

The sisters were next placed as “parlour-boarders” with some ladies in Hamilton Terrace, where they were able to continue their studies under the best London masters, and at last, in July, to Alice’s great joy, she was allowed to return to Richmond, and at once prepared to settle down to home and parish duties.

On September 9 she was confirmed in Richmond Church by the Bishop (Longley) of Ripon,¹ and for this she was lovingly prepared by her father, whose tender care and influence had already done so much to mould and train her character. Writing several years afterwards of her Confirmation Day, she described it as “a day of very mixed feelings, sad from its loneliness, but glad with the joy of a new strength for new duties and new resolutions.”

Chief among her duties she counted the care of her youngest sister, Constance, or “Cooie,” as she was called. Cooie was a golden-haired, blue-eyed little one of three, with a gladsome nature and gentle clinging ways, which soon stirred the very depths of Alice’s affection, as she took her to her heart to protect, and love, and train for God. Her time was also occupied with teaching her little brothers, visiting in the parish, and generally spending herself on those around her, her gentle spirit, with seemingly no thought or consciousness of self, carrying gladness everywhere.

¹ Afterwards successively Bishop of Durham, Archbishop (1860) of York, and Archbishop (1862) of Canterbury.

The following recollections are supplied by a cousin, who made Alice's acquaintance about this time :

" I can just remember first meeting Alice Ottley at Richmond, Yorkshire, when she was about sixteen or seventeen, and used to call for me at my aunt's house to take me for country walks into Aske Woods or round the Castle and to other places. She used to teach me botany, and had a delightfully pleasant way of imparting information. She taught me how to collect flowers and ferns, to press them and fasten them on sheets of paper. Alice was most particular as to this being done neatly and in order. The rectory was near to the church ; it was an ugly house, and as a child I thought it looked gloomy and chill inside. I remember going to tea there with Alice, and seeing her father, who was a very handsome man, with a sweet smile, and Mrs. Ottley with an infant in her arms, and their children round them. Alice, with fair hair put back from her face and steadfast eyes, seemed just like a sunbeam in that house, and all seemed to lean on her. I also went with Alice to a Confirmation in Richmond Church, when her uncle, the Bishop of Ripon (Robert Bickersteth), confirmed, and was much struck by her reverent devotion in church, and by the fact that she wept during the ceremony, as though overcome by the sight of so many people kneeling by turns before her uncle. She was always deeply interested in the young and their welfare.

" Alice was undoubtedly a most unselfish girl, cheerful and lovable, and with sound common sense, which made people trust her and depend upon her, even when only a girl. Hers was not a face that altered much as time went on, and in the upper part of the face of the last photograph taken of her, I can plainly see the same thoughtful, sweet expression of the girl I remember at Richmond."

Not only was she interested in the young, but she was most attractive to them. Her singular sweetness of

disposition and her selflessness, together with her power of throwing herself into their pursuits, endeared her greatly to her younger sisters and brothers, while her strong sense of duty, and her inborn power of discipline, made them look up to her in no ordinary way. Her resourcefulness, too, and her thoroughness in carrying out whatever she undertook, combined to make her a very popular and sympathetic companion, while her keen sense of humour and her love of the beautiful were no slight addition to her charm.

But meanwhile it was the little Cooie who constantly occupied the first place in her thoughts and affection. She was a delicate child, and Alice, into whose special care she had been given, tended her with a mother's rather than a sister's love. Early in 1857, however, Cooie began to grow weaker, and through the spring and summer of this year, Alice had the new sorrow of watching her "precious flower" gradually fade, till on the morning of Sunday, October 25, the little one passed away in her arms, and for the second time in her young life the shadow of bereavement crossed her path. In a letter written, years afterwards, to one of her Worcester girls, she said: "God took from me the little sister who was specially my own. . . . I verily thought that the care and training of my darling little sister was my work in life."

God took Cooie; and Alice, in a spirit of true self-surrender, though with an aching heart, yielded her treasure back to Him, and then, with renewed dedication of herself to His service, she looked round for some fresh object to which to devote herself. The Parish Church at Richmond, which had become very dear to the hearts of Mr. Ottley and his family, was a fine old building, but sorely disfigured inside by the high square pews, with canopies overhead, so common in churches at that time.



ALICE, AGED 17, AND ONE OF HER BROTHERS

The removal of these, and of the galleries which ran round the nave, had long been the rector's great desire, and it was to this that Alice now turned her attention, in the far-distant hope that the church she loved might one day be enriched with a beauty and dignity befitting the House of God. She set herself to earn money in various ways, chiefly by what she called "scrolling," *i.e.* illuminating texts and scrolls, &c., which she did with the utmost delicacy and finish, and for which she found a ready sale among her friends. She also enlisted her sisters and others in the cause.

They were obliged to work quietly, for the idea of re-seating the church had always met with strong opposition from the parishioners, who could not bear the thought of parting with their time-honoured family pews. In the spring of 1858, however, after a nest-egg of £20 had been placed in the bank, it so happened that one Sunday morning during service a heavy piece of plaster fell from the roof of the chancel on to the canopy of the rectory pew, and soon afterwards it was found that the whole of the building, except the tower, was unsafe, and that a complete restoration was necessary.

Vestry-meetings, often very stormy, followed, but the rector, by the pure force of his gentleness and courtesy, won the day, a committee was formed, plans were drawn up, and in June the work was put in hand. A temporary wooden church was erected for use during the restoration. On St. Andrew's Day, a flag, the handiwork of the sisters, embroidered with the words, "God speed the work," floated from the tower, the only portion of the old church left standing; and on March 28, 1859, the rector's little son, Robert,¹ laid the foundation of the new building, burying a bottle of coins beneath it.

¹ Now Canon of Christ Church, and Regius Professor of Pastoral Theology at Oxford.

God did speed the work, for in an incredibly short space of time the sum of £6000 was collected, a glorious new building sprang out of the ruins of the old, and on Easter Tuesday, April 10, 1860, the church was reopened with beautiful choral dedication services, the preachers being Archbishop Longley (of York), the Bishop of Ripon (Robert Bickersteth), and Archdeacon Musgrave (of Richmond).

But, meanwhile, sorrow had once more overtaken the family at the rectory. The pressure of ten years' very hard work had been too great for Mr. Ottley's sensitive nature, and his health had broken down under the strain. In September 1859, after preaching a very striking sermon, which proved to be his last, he was laid low with a paralytic seizure, from which he never entirely recovered. By October 11 he was sufficiently restored to take up his residence at Ripon, (his brother-in-law, the Bishop, had lately appointed him to a vacant canonry), and it was during the three months spent there that his youngest child and son was born. He was never well enough, however, to fulfil his preaching obligations in the Cathedral, and though present the following April at the dedication of his restored church, was only able to take part in the morning service, when he pronounced the Absolution.

As time went on and he became no stronger, it was thought well that he should try a winter abroad, and on September 26, 1860, he, with Mrs. Ottley and two of their daughters, Emily and Georgiana, started for Pau, leaving his beloved parish in the charge of curates, and the large party of little ones at Richmond rectory under the care of Sarah and Alice, to whom this anxious winter proved an opportunity for the development of her innate powers of management and self-sacrifice. By this time the little Robert, who, on her Confirmation Day, had

received the Bishop's blessing as an infant in her arms, was beginning more and more to fill the void left in her heart by the death of Cooie.

Canon Ottley never regained his health, and in the spring of 1861 was brought to London, to be near Dr. Henry Bickersteth, a brother of Mrs. Ottley's, who had lately returned to England from the Cape. He was not only a skilful physician, but was gifted with a tender heart and a rare power of sympathy, which proved a great help and comfort to them all. Owing to their father's increasing weakness, Sarah and Alice were summoned from Richmond, and on the Feast of St. Barnabas (his own birthday), at the age of fifty-three, he entered peacefully into his rest.

His delicate wife was thus left a widow with twelve children, the eldest a girl of twenty-four, the youngest a boy of about eighteen months.

There was deep and sincere grief at Richmond when tidings came of the rector's death ; for by his gracious and gentle bearing, his large-hearted sympathy and pastoral zeal, he had entirely won the hearts of his people, and both he and his family were greatly beloved in the parish.

There are still ¹ old people living in the place who cherish the memory of Lawrence Ottley, his wife and children. One of these, who remembers with pride being chosen, as a girl, out of the school to sew in the rectory nursery, still possesses a Bible given her by " Miss Alice," and also treasures her photograph together with that of her eldest sister.

On leaving Richmond during the following September, Mrs. Ottley and her family were the recipients of various presents from the parishioners, among which were three small gold pencil-cases given by the school-children to

¹ In 1912.

the three eldest daughters. Subjoined is the letter of thanks for these written by Emily and Alice :

“ RICHMOND RECTORY,
September 3, 1861.

“ DEAR CHILDREN,—No words of ours can tell you how very precious your beautiful presents are to us, not only from their own value, but still more from the loving thought which prompted them. Accept each one of you our very warm and affectionate thanks for them ; we shall constantly use them, and as constantly remember the dear, dear children who gave them to us ; for although we are now going to be separated, we can never forget you and the many happy years we have spent among you, and we hope that you will not forget us either, but will think of us sometimes in your prayers, and that you will remember, too, him whom we have lost, and who loved you so dearly, and try to practise in your daily life, at school and at home, the lessons of gentle love and obedience which he taught you. Let us all try earnestly and patiently to follow the Saviour Whom he loved and served, and then we may hope to meet in that happy home where there are no more partings.

“ God bless you each, dear children, and keep and guide you, that you may continue His for ever, and daily increase in His Holy Spirit more and more, till you come to His everlasting Kingdom.—Believe us to be ever your very affectionate friends,

“ EMILY AND ALICE OTTLEY.”

CHAPTER II

HAMPSTEAD AND BRONDESBURY. 1861-1883

"How sweet the ways of Wisdom early gain'd,
Growing with growth, and strength by strength attain'd,
As higher heights and broader ways expand,
A freer air more near th' immortal land,
More treasure stor'd in Heaven ! Then Habit's might
Gives armour, makes the yoke and burden light,
When with spontaneous spring the heart ascends
In prayer to Heaven, in prayer begins and ends ;
Till Custom shall to Nature's strength attain,
Duty her present joy, her future gain,
Opening a wider path in green old age,
Strewed with calm hopes of her high heritage."

The Baptistery.

AFTER her husband's death, Mrs. Ottley was confronted with the problem of providing, with a very limited income, for the education of her seven sons. From the first she made up her mind that they should have those opportunities in life which only a first-rate education can give. Accordingly she took a house in Hampstead, intending to receive into her family a few girls, to be educated with her own two youngest daughters, and here, in the autumn of 1861, she and her children entered upon their new life.

The consequence of this step was that there came under Mrs. Ottley's care a succession of girls, aged, as a rule, from fifteen to twenty, to whom Alice devoted the next twenty years of her life. They gave her the opportunity of developing her gifts as a teacher, gifts which

had already found scope in the nursery at Richmond. At the age of twenty-one, partly from the force of circumstances, but largely as the outcome of her own thoughtful and reserved temperament, she was somewhat old for her years. Her diary and other private memoranda show how serious and steady was her outlook upon life, how strongly and deeply-rooted was her sense of the claim of God upon her gifts and powers. She was beginning to realise her true vocation, and was wisely preparing herself, by faithful use of present opportunities, for larger and more fruitful service in the future.

On October 7, 1862, her sister Emily was married to Fleetwood Porter, then vicar of Slapton, afterwards, for many years, vicar of Banbury. Thus, of Mrs. Ottley's elder daughters, Sarah and Alice were left to be their mother's chief helpers in the difficult and responsible work which she had undertaken. The enlargement of the home circle, which the work brought with it, gave Alice special opportunities of gaining an insight, invaluable to her in later life, into the nature and needs of girls widely differing in character and temperament. Alice's task was not at first altogether easy or congenial :

"My own recollection of Alice when I first went to Mrs. Ottley at Hampstead," writes one of the girls of those early days, "is that she was of a peculiarly shy and retiring nature, disliking to take the prominent place into which she was forced more by circumstances than desire. She was very humble-minded, and shrank especially from finding fault with any of us ; in fact I am sure that it required much courage for her to do so. I remember that on one occasion, when she wished to speak to us about some incident that called for a word of gentle reproof, she waited until we had finished the cake and milk which we had before going to bed, and then turned down the gas before speaking.



ALICE AND CHARLES OTTLEY (1861)

"I don't think that it ever occurred to us that she was especially clever or powerful, but we all loved her for her gentleness and sweetness, and we thoroughly realised and admired her extreme unselfishness and devotion to her family, and the way in which she worked, and was ready to sacrifice anything, to enable her younger brothers to have all the educational advantages possible. She never seemed to want anything for herself, but everything for them. It was her life, not her words, that influenced us; no one could be near her without feeling her goodness, and she had the wonderful power of making goodness attractive."

I

A delightful sketch of Alice Ottley and her surroundings during the last eight years of her Hampstead life is given by Miss Agnes Hitchcock, a friend of that time, in the following reminiscences :

"I first knew Alice Ottley in the early 'seventies,' when my father took a house in Hampstead, and we were for a few years near neighbours of Mrs. Ottley. A cousin, three or four years younger than myself, was at that time one of the small number, never, I think, exceeding seven, of her pupils, and there had been some slight previous acquaintance between members of our respective families, so that a friendly intercourse was soon established. But it was, I think, on our own merits that Alice accepted my sisters and myself. One of a large family herself, she had much in common with us, and it was not long before she became to us, as to so many girls before and since, the kind friend and adviser, to whom every trouble and perplexity might be brought. She was then, and always, the best of listeners. It mattered not whether the trouble had arisen from one's own shortcomings, or the extraordinary prejudices of lawful authorities, or the perversity of one's contemporaries—it made no difference to the patience with which she listened, a half-amused look in her kind eyes,

to the vehemence with which the story was poured out. She never made the mistake of offering excuses for the offender against whom one's wrath was directed, long before the moment for admitting them had arrived, nor did she fall into the opposite error of giving injudicious sympathy to feed the flame. She heard one to the end, and then, in the higher plane to which her very presence seemed to lift one, it was wonderful how the grievance that had seemed so monstrous before, dwindled and vanished away.

"I have been asked to describe her as she was in those days. Looking back, it seems to me that she changed very little. She must have been thirty-two or thirty-three when I first knew her, but she looked older. She had already had the charge of girls for some years, and for their sakes she had chosen to give up much that would still have been suitable at her age. The slight, active figure, the delicate features, the complexion of almost ivory whiteness, the smooth, fine hair, simply parted, and plaited in the fashion which she never changed, the plain, exquisitely neat dress, were almost exactly the same as in much later life. The clear blue eyes and delightful smile constituted the chief beauty of her face then as they did to the end. No portrait that I have ever seen of her can satisfy those who knew her, or give any adequate idea of her to those who did not. There is, in one of Memling's smaller paintings in the Hôpital St. Jean at Bruges, a kneeling figure with face uplifted to the Madonna, that struck me by its likeness to her when I first saw it many years ago. In purity of line, delicacy of colouring, and peaceful serenity of expression, it still seems to me to give a better idea of the spiritual beauty of her countenance than the work of any modern artist could convey.

"Though I frequently saw her at Hampstead—sometimes every day—I did not know much of her actual teaching. The girls were constantly with her; it was not often easy to find her alone. She walked and rode with them, shared in all their interests, and, better still,

made them sharers in many of her own. Excellent masters came to give lessons in special subjects, and Alice used to say that she and her girls learned of them together. She must have been an inspiring pupil, for the one clear impression I retain of these masters, most of whose names I have forgotten, is the eagerness they all showed to give her of their best, and their high appreciation of her ability. In the schoolroom she was supreme, with her sister Agnes as her devoted companion and helper. Over the rest of the house, Mrs. Ottley held undisputed sway, and nothing in Alice's character was more admirable than her unwavering loyalty to her mother's wishes, even in what might have seemed to many, matters indifferent. She was veritably her right hand, but she never, even in trifles, assumed a particle of the authority that belonged to her mother as head of the household.

"Mrs. Ottley, in spite of delicate health that had for years obliged her to lead a semi-invalid life, was a woman of great mental vigour, and of amazing energy and strength of will. She was a great reader, a rapid and excellent letter-writer, keeping up an active correspondence with all the absent members of her family and innumerable friends, as well as with the friends of her pupils, often getting through an incredible amount of business before she left her room in the morning. Small, and exquisitely dainty in all her ways, she was always charming to look upon, in her spotless lace caps and soft white shawls. Her pretty drawing-room with its fresh chintzes, plentiful supply of books, water-colour drawings and old china, always kept a look of the country rectory, to which most of its furnishings had originally belonged. Dignified and a little awe-inspiring, with a certain old-fashioned stateliness of manner and speech, she was the kindest and staunchest of friends to those once admitted within the circle of her intimates. Her joy and pride in all her children were very pretty to see, and if it sometimes seemed that the absent sons had an even larger share of her affection than the stay-at-home daughters, it was a weakness

shared by so many mothers in those mid-Victorian days, that it was very easily overlooked.

"Another member of the home party to whom we became greatly attached, was the eldest sister, Sarah, or, as everyone called her, Sally. Alice's senior by some years, she gave unstinted love and admiration to her more brilliant sister, helping her in numbers of little unconsidered ways. Her life, indeed, was spent in constant loving activity for her family, her friends, and the numerous poor pensioners whom she found time to visit and to help. Her feet seemed to be always running on errands of mercy, and her hands working busily for some good cause. If she lacked Alice's ability and force of character, she resembled her closely in the crowning grace of perfect unselfishness.

"Troubles that came to us as the years went on made Alice more than ever a helpful friend. We had gone to Hampstead to retrench, and the necessity for doing so increased. The economic independence of women was a new doctrine, and had not been preached in our hearing, but the duty of a member of a large family, in which there were a younger brother and sisters still to be educated, seemed sufficiently clear for me to think of preparing myself to earn my own living. Teaching was at that time the only work—we did not then think or speak of it as a 'career'—open to women, and as a first step, I began to attend some courses of lectures at University College, that had been recently organised in preparation for the Cambridge Higher Local Examination. The London University degrees had not yet been made accessible to women, nor were any of the regular classes at University College open to them, but some of the professors, more alive than their fellows to the needs of the day, had formed an Educational Association for Women, and were generously devoting much time and thought to helping students who had been long waiting for such opportunities, or who, like myself, had only just begun to desire them. The lectures were given in University College, Gower Street, more or less, I imagine, on sufferance, for they were mostly in the late

afternoon or evening, in any room that happened to be available. Whatever the hour, they were very well attended. Some of the students were already teachers, others were preparing to become so, all were bent on making the most of these new facilities for higher education. Many future Head-mistresses were among the most regular attendants. Miss Day, already head-mistress of the Grey Coat Hospital, Miss Connolly of the Haberdashers' School, Hatcham, Mrs. Woodhouse of the Sheffield and, later, of the Clapham High School, Miss Benton of the South Hampstead High School,—these are only a few of the names that come to me, as I go back in memory to those gloomy ink-stained rooms, where I made many friends and spent many pleasant hours. The only drawback to attendance at the lectures was the distance from Hampstead, involving dull and tedious journeys to and fro. It was a great relief to me, therefore, when, in the second year of my attendance at the University College, Alice began to attend some of the lectures with one or two of her elder pupils, and I was often able to join her party. She had not then, I think, any intention of presenting herself for the Cambridge Higher Local Examination. She enjoyed the lectures, especially those of Professor Henry Morley, for their own sake, and for the stimulus they gave to her teaching.

"When she found time for any work of her own was a mystery. She was always at hand—always ready to respond to other people's needs, never attempting to withdraw herself from the constant claims on her time and attention. The life she led was essentially a home life—as home life for women was understood in those days; it admitted of little privacy for quiet reading, or for occupations that could not be carried on in the midst of the family circle. To Alice this seemed to matter the less, that she had at all times the power of concentration, and had early learnt to make the most of the few quiet moments that came in her busy life. Much of her reading of the books that we were studying was done as we jolted from Hampstead to Gower Street

in a slow-moving omnibus, or waited on the stuffy platform of an 'Underground' station. It was not her way to waste even such odds and ends of time. Many of the little presents which she delighted in giving to her friends were made at odd moments, when her hands would be busy while she talked, or more often listened to others talking. Such presents were always characteristic. I have still the tiny pocket prayer-book in its beautifully-stitched cover, and the illuminated text, 'Work thy work betimes, and in His time He shall give thee thy reward,' that were her parting gifts to me when I began my teaching life in the Oxford High School, under its first Head-mistress, Miss Benson. The fact that the work on which I was entering was a kind of which Alice had had no experience, and for which, at that time, she had a curious distaste, did not prevent her from showing me the utmost kindness and sympathy, at what we both felt was a turning-point in my life. Day schools for girls did not then appeal to her; they seemed to her to afford too little scope for the character-training which she considered the highest work of the teacher. She had dealt with girls as individuals, she used to say, and she did not think she could ever bring herself to treat them *en masse*. Her first direct contact with a high school came when I had been about two years at Oxford. In the summer of 1877, Miss Benson was ordered abroad, the appointment of a deputy for the few remaining weeks of the term was necessary, and I ventured to suggest that Miss Alice Ottley might be induced to fill the post. The school was still in its first home—the Judges' Lodgings, a beautiful old house in St. Giles', with the great drawback that it had to be given up to its rightful tenants at times that did not coincide with the usual school holidays. The inconvenience of having terms and holidays at different times from other schools was so great that eventually the old house, delightful as it was, had to be given up and other quarters found. But on this occasion it was an advantage, for the holidays at Hampstead had begun, Miss Ottley was at liberty, and she consented to come to

Oxford, where, for those few weeks, I had the joy of working under her. Short as her stay was, it left its mark. Mistresses and girls alike were impressed by her practical ability, her scholarship, above all by her sweet graciousness of manner and her unvarying gentleness. In a school that then numbered among its leading spirits, Bradleys, Arnolds, Max Müllers, Furses, Rollestons, Prices, Fletchers, and Merrys, the critical element was not wanting, but Alice's high and lovable qualities met at once with full recognition. Young as the girls were, they saw, too, without defining it, something in her that was above and beyond intellect and natural sweetness of disposition. 'A saint,' was the involuntary exclamation of one of the most brilliant of the sixth form of those days, when she heard, in 1912, that the Head-mistress of Worcester had passed away, though the chances of life had never brought them together again since those few weeks at Oxford.

"The short experience was not, I believe, without effect on Alice. She saw the inner life of a school, organised by one who, like herself, was an idealist, whose standard was as high as her own. She saw the possibilities of service which such a school presented, she gained, perhaps, an unexpected insight into her own powers. But, at the time, nothing was farther from her hopes and wishes than the Head-mistress-ship of a public school. She was still dreaming of the time when, the pressure of home claims having lessened, she would be free to join the staff of her friend, Miss Clarke, at Warrington Crescent. We did not often talk of this, for I disliked the idea of it for her, and I have no doubt I said so.

"During the last years at Hampstead I saw her very seldom. My own people had settled in Devonshire, where I spent most of my holidays, and soon after I had gone back to London as Head-mistress of the Chelsea, later the Kensington High School, Mrs. Ottley gave up her house in Hampstead and moved to Chiswick.¹

¹ The last of Mrs. Ottley's pupils passed from her care in December 1880, and Alice spent the Christmas of that year in Rome, with her brother Robert. This was a never-to-be-for-

Alice, no longer needed at home, went to Warrington Crescent, and later to Brondesbury, where, for a time, she seemed lost to me. I was never able to go and see her there, and perhaps I made no great effort to do so, for, if I may say so now, the position she was in seemed to me from the first a false one, and I was impatient to see her in one in which she would have greater scope."

II

Apart from the mental and moral discipline involved in her own studies and in her work with her pupils, Alice Ottley made good use of other educational advantages, which residence at Hampstead brought within her reach. She was within easy distance of the library of the British Museum, and occasionally made use of it; moreover, she constantly enjoyed the opportunities of hearing first-rate music, and of studying art in the National Gallery and elsewhere. Nor must the influence of travel be forgotten. As a rule she was able to enjoy a short foreign tour during her summer holidays, and few people can have gained more than she did from these expeditions. She became familiar in this way with different parts of France, Belgium, Austria, Italy, and, above all, Switzerland. She learned to throw herself into the lives and interests of the people whom she met abroad, and gradually perfected her linguistic powers. Finally, she had frequent opportunities of intercourse with able and cultured people—friends of her own or of her family—whose conversation or influence helped to expand her intellect and widen

gotten visit, not only from its own intrinsic pleasure and interest (see Chapter VIII), but because she felt that it marked an era in her life. The following February saw her settled at Miss Clarke's school in Warrington Crescent, a branch of which was opened soon afterwards at Brondesbury.



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN
IN ROME (1881)

her mental horizon. And as time went on, through her brothers, her cousins John and Joseph Mayor, and other friends, she came in contact with the keen intellectual life of the Universities; she learned to understand and appreciate ideas, movements, and tendencies of thought, which were new to her and not always welcome. Her sympathies became broader; she learned something of the many-sidedness of truth, and of those vast differences of religious experience and mental training which have to be reckoned with in the training of character and in the solution of practical problems.

It remains to say something about Alice's spiritual growth during these years. Endowed by nature, as we have seen, with a deeply serious and religious temperament, she had been, from early childhood, devotedly attached to the Church. This characteristic was fostered no doubt by her love for *The Christian Year* and *The Baptistry*; but when quite a little girl her father had playfully described her as a "little Puseyite." During the late sixties, owing to the engagement of her sister, Georgiana, to Mr. Fitzroy Sewell, she made the acquaintance of the Rev. William Cleaver¹—a connexion which was destined to have an important influence on her future ideas and plans.

William Henry Cleaver came of a saintly stock. His father, the Rev. William Cleaver, Rector of Delgany, County Wicklow, was a man of rare spiritual power; his grandfather was Dr. Euseby Cleaver, Archbishop of Dublin, and his great-uncle, a man even better known in the theological world, was Dr. William Cleaver, Bishop of Chester, and afterwards of St. Asaph.

Mr. Cleaver, after some years of training for the legal profession, took Holy Orders, and in 1865 was appointed curate under the Rev. R. T. West at St. Mary Magda-

¹ Mr. Cleaver's brother had lately married Mr. Sewell's sister.

lene's, Paddington. The influence of that church, from the sixties onwards, is too well known to need description here; suffice it to say that Mr. Cleaver threw himself heart and soul into the work of upholding the ideals set forth by Mr. West, and by his power as a preacher, and still more by the force of his personal piety, soon made his influence very widely felt.

He was a gifted preacher and an inspiring teacher. In particular he held very decided views respecting the place of religion in the education of the young. Believing, as he did, that "the battle of the Church would be fought on the field of education," he was convinced that everything depended on the personal sanctity of individual teachers.

It was not long before Alice came under the spell of his spiritual influence, and he too was not slow to recognise her intellectual gifts and her power of self-devotion. Through him she came to know and to love St. Mary Magdalene's Church, and it was only natural that the fuller sacramental teaching received there should find in her a ready response and should satisfy the deepest instincts of her nature.

The next few years were a period of rapid growth in her spiritual life; a period in which she gradually formed those lifelong habits of self-discipline and systematic devotion which did indeed "give armour," and

"make the yoke and burden light,"

during the years of stress and strain which came to her in later life.

The difficulties mentioned by Miss Hitchcock in connexion with her intellectual growth, the constant claims of others on her time and care, the lack of any corner of the house to call her own, (she had not even a bed-

room to herself), might well have hindered her spiritual, as well as her mental, development. Nevertheless, in spite of these and other difficulties, or rather as a result of the discipline involved in them, her faith shone out ever more brightly as her convictions deepened through those years. Her own difficulties, faced and conquered, helped to develop in her the gift of wise and bracing sympathy, which, in after years, she was ever ready to extend to those who came to her for spiritual counsel and help.

And it was to Mr. Cleaver that she looked for spiritual guidance from this time onwards. Writing after his death in 1909, she spoke of "the unspeakable privilege of his instruction and direction," and added that "wonderful as was his power of sympathy, and delightful the sense of pure fun which sparkled through his deep seriousness, yet the characteristic which specially marked him, was that never, for a moment, when with him, was it possible to forget that other Presence in which he lived and moved and had his being"—words which may very truly be used of herself also. One who knew him well speaks of "his deep humility, his boundless love and power of sympathy, the direct outcome of a life lived in the constant recollection of the Presence of God and in communion with the great High Priest, his marvellous gift of attracting souls, his ungrudging service for them, and his unequalled power of throwing his whole heart and soul into the trials and sorrows, as well as the joys and aspirations, of those who sought his counsel."

Such was he to whom, in later years, Alice Ottley felt that, under God, she owed much of what she held most dear in life. Mr. Cleaver was for some years chaplain to the Community of St. Peter's, Kilburn. Through his influence she was brought into touch with

the sisters, and eventually became an associate of the Community, a connexion which she greatly valued. Most important of all, perhaps, in the shaping of her future career, was the fact that through Mr. Cleaver she became intimate with Miss Clarke, and definitely turned her thoughts towards teaching as her vocation in life.

III

Margaret Clarke, after many years spent as a governess in private families, was now the successful Principal of a large girls' boarding-school in St. Mary Magdalene's parish, and Alice, who had been, as a girl of sixteen or seventeen, deeply impressed by a talk with her on the subject of education,¹ was delighted to renew her acquaintance, and to make opportunities of visiting her from time to time at her school.

In this way it came about that she took an important part in the foundation of the "Society of the Holy Name," an association for Church teachers, now well-known in the world of religious education.

Miss Clarke's original idea for the Society may be described in Alice Ottley's own words, taken from her first letter to the members in 1897, when, at Miss Clarke's wish, she had succeeded her as Superior :

¹ Years later, after Miss Clarke's death, Alice Ottley wrote : " I believe it was in the year 1856 or 1857 that I first saw Miss Clarke, then a governess in a remote Yorkshire vicarage, to which I had come with my father on a ' Rural-Dean ' expedition. I was but a child, beginning to pass on to my younger sisters and brothers such education as I possessed ; but one half-hour's walk in the garden with her sufficed to change the humdrum of school routine into the fulfilment of a vocation, and to raise immeasurably the ideal standard of what a teacher's life should be."

"When God first put into Miss Clarke's mind that seed-thought which was to bear such rich fruit, she was herself a governess, keenly feeling the special trials of that life to a peculiarly sensitive nature ; and when the time came for the plant to be developed in His garden, the Church, He had brought her into connexion with one singularly endowed with that chivalrous sympathy on the one hand, and that deep spirituality on the other, which fitted our first Warden, the Rev. W. H. Cleaver, to be so strong and wise a helper in promoting her primary object : which was to cheer and lift the life of the isolated governess, not by encouraging a morbid self-pity, but by helping her to realise the height of her vocation, its great possibilities and crowning rewards ; and by bringing to her the sense of union with her fellow-workers, by mutual intercession and sympathy."

After much prayer and thought on the part of Mr. Cleaver,¹ Miss Clarke, and Miss Ottley, the Society came into being on St. Andrew's Day, 1872, when the first six members were admitted by Mr. Cleaver, in what was then called "the Little Church" (St. Ambrose), in St. Mary Magdalene's parish.

The address given by Mr. Cleaver, as Warden, on the words, "We then, as workers together with Him," laid down the lines on which the Society should work.

In the following September, the first Retreat for the Society was held at Miss Clarke's school in Warrington Crescent, and from this time forward the yearly Retreat was regarded by Alice as a spiritual opportunity which she would not lightly forego.²

¹ The Rev. George Body, afterwards Canon Body, also had a share in drawing up the Constitution and Rules of the Society.

² Writing in 1901 to the members of the Society on the value of Retreats, she spoke of their having been to many "a new era in their life, a lifting of the mist which so often dims our sight of things spiritual, a raising of our daily work into another sphere of thought, a restoring of the balance between things of

The story of this period of her life cannot be completed without touching upon an episode which, though little talked about, was yet of very great moment to herself, and to some of those whom she held most dear.

For many years Miss Clarke had entertained the idea of founding a teaching Order, which was to grow out of the Society of the Holy Name, consisting of such of its members as might be willing to devote their lives to the work of teaching in a spirit of entire self-dedication to God.

Alice Ottley was one of the chief supporters of this project, but such was not the Divine purpose for her. In 1882, just when the hopes that had been formed seemed to be within reach of fulfilment, to her own and others' heartfelt sorrow, it was found that the project could not be carried out.

This long-cherished desire of Alice's heart to dedicate her life to God in the work of teaching, naturally left its impress upon her whole character. It formed, so to speak, the spiritual background of all her work at Worcester. Those of her Worcester "Old Girls" who are now members of religious communities, can testify how remarkable was her insight into the difficulties and trials of the religious life; how deep was her sympathy with its aims and spirit. One who is now a novice of the Community of St. Mary the Virgin at Wantage, writes:

time and of eternity." "Surely," she continued, "it has not been the least of God's good gifts to our English Church, in the last century, that to meet the increased hurry and fret of modern life, He has restored to her this wonderful blessing, this means of obeying our Lord's tender command, 'Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile'; and very many who cannot speak of what is so sacred and intimate a joy, know that in Retreat they have learned to seek Him Whom their 'soul loveth,' and to find Him and be found of Him."

" Looking back, one thing strikes me above others : she was like a ' Religious.' Many things that struck one at school seemed unique in her—her utter detachment from material possessions, for instance, her extraordinary single-heartedness, her intense loyalty—and these things one has found again in the age-old ideals of the Religious Life. She was what she was, and did what she did, in the power of her consecration, and glimmerings of this light in her must have reached even the densest of us."

It was the enforced relinquishment of these hopes of hers that led her to take up the life-work for which God had been training her ; and in a spirit of true self-surrender she went forth " to fulfil the desire of her heart to do His will," albeit not in the way which she herself had chosen.

LETTERS BEARING UPON THIS PERIOD (1861-1883)

From Miss Ottley to one of her pupils on gaining her " Honour Certificate " in the Cambridge Higher Local Examination :

" August 11, 1876.

" A very great surprise has come to me. I have got an ' Honour Certificate ' from Cambridge, I cannot think why ; for I did not take up subjects enough ; but they say I have passed in everything, and I have three ' Distinctions,' which I suppose they weigh against the fewer subjects. I am very glad that one is for ' Divinity,' which I thought impossible ; the others are English Literature and French. I cannot understand it, except that God sends it to me."

To the same, written from Oxford, when taking Miss Benson's place as Head-mistress of the High School :

" July 26, '77.

" Your letter has been all too long unanswered ; but just after receiving it, I was, most unexpectedly, summoned here, as the Head-mistress, Miss Benson, the Bishop of Truro's sister, had utterly broken down. I came to do what I could in helping her, but a few days later she became so ill that she had to go, and I found myself, to my own astonishment, deputy Head-mistress. It is a proof that the impossible can be done on an emergency, but you may imagine it has not only been hard work, but rather bewildering ; however, I am getting on from day to day, and thoroughly enjoy the actual teaching ; the tone of the school is splendid, and the sixth form, which consists of three girls only, reminds me exactly of my own ; only I have never had girls who could produce such splendid work in examination as these three do. The fifth and fourth are quite delightful also, and the kindergarten, such darlings. I have all the forms for Divinity, and some for other subjects, and the class-teaching is very amusing, but it tries one's throat dreadfully, especially with the relaxing air of Oxford. There are two girls to whom my heart jumped ; one is so like A—— and the other like M——. I was quite sorry to torture the latter with viva-voce, but she did not seem to mind it ; in fact they are all as happy and bright as possible. Examinations began yesterday, and will go on till the break-up next Thursday ; then I stay on a few days to enjoy Oxford, for at present I do nothing but go from home to school and back, except Evensong at a lovely church near, and rarely get work done by 11 P.M."

From two of the " Hampstead Girls " of 1875 and 1876 :

" In the Hampstead surroundings the girls were emphatically made to feel they were part of the home, and being few in number, were brought into closer personal touch with Alice than could be possible with larger numbers ; she was their elder sister and never-

failing friend, sharing their sorrows, joys, and difficulties with true and strengthening sympathy.

" Yet in her relation to them, such wise restraint was manifested, that whilst encouraging all simple, natural affection, it was never allowed to degenerate into sentimental emotionalism ; the secret of this surely being that she never sought to attract to *herself*, but always to point her children onwards and upwards to the Divine Love which sanctifies all human friendship.

" For the spring and source of everything, both for herself and for her girls, was the spiritual life in all its fulness. Her own devotion, reverence, beautiful example, and intense love for her Master spoke louder than words and became an abiding inspiration, while her sound teaching of the Faith laid foundations which made those whom she taught loyal and faithful daughters of the dear old Mother Church which she loved so well.

" Alice Ottley imbued all with a great desire and love for social service in connexion with Church life, at the same time inculcating strongly the beauty and sanctity of home duties. Nor did the intellectual side of girl-life find a secondary place under her influence, imparting, as she did, a true delight in all that is best in literature, music, and art. Her claim for care and perfection in detail, for thoroughness and accuracy in work of any kind, was felt by all, and made its mark on many trained by her, with far-reaching results in later life and in wider fields of social service.

" Her study of individual character was most remarkable, and looking back, one cannot fail to see that in this and in many other ways, the years at Hampstead afforded the experience which fitted her for that larger sphere in which her brilliant mental gifts, her high sense of vocation, and her outward charm of voice and manner found yet fuller scope."

From Miss Body, late Head-mistress of Queen Margaret's School, Scarborough :

“ As far as I can remember, it was about the middle of the Lent Term, 1881, that Miss Ottley joined the staff of Miss Clarke’s school, of which I was at that time one of the younger pupils. The school was still being carried on at 26 Warrington Crescent, previous to its removal to its beautiful country premises at Brondesbury Park, and the life was a very quiet one, its interests few, and topics of conversation circumscribed. I well remember the flutter of excitement with which we greeted the arrival of a new member of the household, the quiet, frail-looking little mistress, who, we were told, was a friend of Miss Clarke’s, come to help her with her work. The little mistress, though so quiet and unassuming, was destined to make, in the short time she worked there, a wonderful mark upon the life of the school.

“ And first, as a teacher. After thirty-five years’ experience of schools, I can truly say that I have never known a teacher like Miss Ottley. To me her coming brought the first real stimulus my mind had experienced. To this day, looking back, I can see that intellectually I owe everything to her; and the same, doubtless, is true of many others who were girls under her at Miss Clarke’s school. Her teaching was full of life—interesting and stimulating to a degree I have never known surpassed.

“ Her classes were chiefly on English Literature, and the subjects we studied with her became possessions for life. For her lessons were not only delightfully interesting to listen to; she had also the faculty of arousing in a wonderful degree the self-activity of her pupils, and the response she obtained from them in the way of ardent, thorough, ungrudging work was really remarkable. Our work with our beloved teacher was not only marked by vivid interest, but by a remarkable soundness and thoroughness—two features by no means always combined. Whatever we learnt with Miss Ottley, we loved dearly and knew thoroughly, and to this day the works we studied with her—Milton’s *Lesser Poems*, Hooker’s *Ecclesiastical Polity* (Book I), Chaucer’s ‘Prologue’ to

the *Canterbury Tales*, and *King Lear*—are associated in my mind with the sense of vivid, delightful interest and thorough mastery, which is one of the most captivating and stimulating experiences a learner can enjoy.

“ Her spiritual influence was also strongly felt, though very quietly and indirectly exercised. We had no Divinity lessons with her, and so had no opportunity of profiting by her wonderful Scripture teaching. But one Holy Week, instead of our usual literature lessons, we learnt with her, as ‘Recitation,’ the magnificent chapter from Isaiah, ‘Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?’—and the effect upon my mind was so marked, that each year it comes back to me, vivid, fresh, and strong, as one of the dominating features of the Holy Week lessons.

“ When we moved to Brondesbury, the beautiful little chapel was placed in her care, and deeply, though quietly and unconsciously, were we impressed and helped by the singular beauty of her devout and reverent spirit, as it showed itself animating all in her work that pertained to the worship and service of God in that little school sanctuary.

“ It was a terrible grief to us all when we heard that Miss Ottley, after a few terms of work at Miss Clarke’s, had been appointed Head-mistress of the new High School at Worcester, and must leave us for her fresh sphere of ministry. But though her wonderful powers were lost to the work as a whole, with many of her pupils, as with myself, the seeds of a lasting friendship had been sown, and the teaching, guidance, sympathy, help and influence of Alice Ottley were destined to become one of the greatest and most unfailing blessings of our lives.”

The following letter from Miss Clarke, a copy of which is kindly furnished by an early member of the Society of the Holy Name, bears upon the project of a religious Teaching Order mentioned above :

"26 WARRINGTON CRESCENT,
MAIDA HILL, W.

March 3, 1879.

"MY DEAR MISS —, I meant to have written to you by All Saints' Day, but was prevented.

"I may write quite freely to you of that which is not spoken about openly as yet.

"It has long been felt that something was to come out of the life here, and now the 'something' . . . is really taking shape, and in the end we believe it will issue in a Religious Teaching Order or Community, at first, not exactly on the lines of any Religious Order already formed, but still true Religious Life, adapting itself to the life and necessities of the work we have undertaken. There are four of us now keeping a simple rule, and gradually feeling our way under Mr. Cleaver and Mr. Body, with Dean Church to help and counsel them.

"I need not say, if you have been drawn to think of such a life, or of such dedication and consecration of your life to the work of teaching the upper classes, in order to revive among them the Catholic Faith, how glad I should be, if it were God's will, that you should join us some time. It is difficult to write fully by letter in the hurry and pressure of our present term (which is a busy one) on this subject as I should like.

"Our Community is meant to be very simple and on common-sense lines, rather than any reproduction of former times;—to be adapted in every respect to our work. Dress, Offices, &c., to give way to the needs of the case. Still, it will be essentially framed on true Religious Life, and under a seemingly easy life, it will be one of continual self-sacrifice and utter devotion to our work. It has been growing quietly for several years. With much love and sympathy, Believe me, dear Miss —, yours very sincerely,

"MARGARET CLARKE."

Note.—A Community on these lines (The Community of the Holy Family) is now carrying on educational work in London, with Sister Agnes Mason as its head.

CHAPTER III

WORCESTER. BEGINNINGS. 1883

"We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord."

It was on the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6, 1881, that the Rev. W. J. Butler, well known as "Butler of Wantage," entered on his duties as Canon of Worcester. Gifted, as has been truly said, with "the genius of a great educationalist," it was natural that he should at once apply himself to the needs of Worcester in the matter of education.

After first successfully planning and helping to start the present Cathedral Choir School, his attention was turned to the want of better provision for secondary education of girls belonging to the city and county, which was then beginning to make itself acutely felt. "While good endowed schools supplied amply the needs of the boys, their sisters were dependent upon private effort, which had proved wholly inadequate to meet the ever-increasing demands of the educational movement of the time."

The success of the Oxford High School for Girls, of which his friend, Miss Bishop, afterwards Principal of Holloway College, and later of St. Gabriel's College, Kennington, was then Head-mistress, had converted him to a belief in the day-school system, against which he had at one time been strongly prejudiced, and he determined to start a High School in Worcester, on a religious basis, with definite Church teaching.

I

The following account of a meeting of representative Churchmen and citizens of Worcester, called by Canon Butler on February 20, 1883, appeared in one of the local newspapers, together with a leading article from the pen of the Canon himself :

“PROPOSED HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS.

“A project for establishing a High School for Girls in Worcester, which has been initiated by the Rev. Canon Butler, took formal shape in a very influential preliminary meeting held on Tuesday at Canon Butler’s residence in the College Green. On the motion of the Rev. the Hon. H. Douglas, Canon Butler was voted to the chair. Amongst those present were the Lord-Lieutenant (Earl Beauchamp), the Very Rev. the Dean (Lord Alwyne Compton), the Mayor (Mr. F. Corbett), the Rev. and Hon. H. Douglas, the Rev. Canon Cattley, the Revs. W. Gardiner, T. G. Curtler, R. H. Blair, and W. Carr, Lieut.-Col. Stallard, Dr. Crowe, and Messrs. G. A. Sheppard, G. E. Hyde, Walter Webb, T. Southall, G. E. Abell, J. S. Isaac, H. Goldingham, jun., F. Parker, C. H. Birbeck, R. W. Binns, C. M. Downes, S. S. Forster, and J. H. Hooper. Letters of sympathy were read from the Bishop of Worcester, the High Sheriff (Mr. G. E. Martin), and Mr. A. Pemberton.

“The CHAIRMAN explained the objects of the meeting, gave some necessary information as to the successful work being done by High Schools in various parts of the country, and as to the principles on which they were based, and urged that the general need of a more thorough, definite, and extended education of women, and the particular and pressing need for such

a system of education in Worcester, suggested the necessity of a movement for the establishment here of a High School for girls. He further pointed out the central position of Worcester, its accessibility to the best teachers of their kind in Birmingham and Oxford, and the probability that, with all these adventitious aids in its favour, the High School in Worcester would become a considerable county institution. Alluding to the question of religious teaching, the Chairman urged the necessity for making that teaching of a definite Church character, but insisted upon the importance of such a conscience clause being established as would make it possible for parents who objected to such teaching to withdraw their children from it. The Chairman instanced the cases of the Exeter High School (founded under Dr. Temple's auspices), and the Truro High School (founded by Dr. Benson, the Archbishop-Elect of Canterbury), to show how well and smoothly such a principle of religious teaching, with a conscience clause, worked.

“Earl BEAUCHAMP moved ‘That in the opinion of this meeting the institution of a High School for Girls in the city of Worcester would confer considerable benefits on the community; and that such a school should accordingly be instituted without delay, on a basis insuring that the religious instruction be in accordance with the principles of the Church, but that no pupil be required to attend such instruction whose parents objected on religious grounds.’ His Lordship expressed his warm approval of the scheme which Canon Butler had initiated, insisted upon the vast importance, in these times of scepticism and infidelity, of securing for our girls the advantages of a sound and Christian education, and urged the general advantages of a High School, as likely to provide some safety and resource against the sharp and severe competition of the times. Earl Beauchamp

prophesied that, if the project were warmly taken up, Worcester would ultimately become a great educational centre.

"The resolution was seconded by Mr. G. E. ABELL, who entered a plea for a school which should be as wide as the Church itself, with a conscience clause which would secure for others the advantages of its teaching, and was carried unanimously.

"The MAYOR moved 'That in order effectually to carry out the project of a High School, a limited liability company be formed, and registered under the Companies Act.'

"This was seconded by Lieut.-Colonel STALLARD, who urged that some provision should be made to control the transfer of shares, and was carried unanimously.

"The Very Rev. the DEAN moved, and Mr. T. SOUTHALL seconded, 'That Earl Beauchamp, the Mayor, the Rev. Canon Butler, Lieut.-Col. Stallard, Mr. J. S. Isaac, Mr. G. E. Abell, and the mover and seconder (with power to add to their number), be appointed a committee to obtain an eligible site for the school, to ascertain the probable cost of fitting and furnishing, the staff of teachers and servants required, and to report upon these and such other matters as may appear to them necessary at a future meeting.'

"This was carried unanimously.

"On the motion of the Rev. R. H. BLAIR, seconded by Mr. J. H. HOOPER, Mr. C. M. Downes was appointed hon. secretary.

"A cordial vote of thanks was given to the Chairman on the proposal of Earl BEAUCHAMP."

This committee, with the addition of the Rev. W. Gardiner, then Vicar of St. George's, Worcester, Mr. G. E. Martin, and Mr. F. Parker, formed the first Council of

the High School, Lord Beauchamp being chairman. The Bishop of the Diocese consented to be Visitor. A visiting committee of ladies was also appointed, consisting of Lady Beauchamp, Lady Alwyne Compton, Mrs. Butler, Mrs. G. E. Martin, Mrs. F. Price Hughes, and Mrs. Wheeley Lea.

The "site" found was a stately eighteenth-century house in the Tything, bearing on its front a fine figure of Britannia, the work of one Thomas White, a pupil of Sir Christopher Wren ; hence its name, Britannia House. This, with its beautiful lawn and garden, was leased by its owner to the Council for the first few months on somewhat stringent conditions ; but in November, 1883, Lord Beauchamp, ever a kind benefactor and staunch supporter of the school, announced that he had bought the property, and offered it for the use of the school on generous terms, with the power of purchase at any time. This offer was of course gratefully accepted.¹

Already Canon Butler had been searching for a lady who would carry on the work of girls' education in Worcester on the lines he had indicated.

Miss Bishop² writes :

" It was while Canon Butler's plans for establishing a High School at Worcester were still maturing, that he issued his command to me—' Find me a Head-mistress.' I told him that I knew the ideal woman for the post, but I did not think there was the remotest chance of getting her, because she was devoted to her work in Miss Clarke's School.

" To suggest that a thing was impossible was (we all

¹ In 1898, to Miss Ottley's great satisfaction, the freehold of the High School property was acquired by the Council on a mortgage, which is being gradually paid off.

² Miss Bishop died July 1, 1913, while this Memoir was in preparation.

know) to strengthen his determination to achieve it. And he did achieve it after much difficulty. Not that the post was undesirable in Miss Ottley's eyes, but her humility, and her innate diffidence in regard to her own powers, made her shrink from it, and it was only when she could be convinced that the importance of the work, and her manifest fitness for it, constituted a call to do it, that she gave in, and accepted the appointment.

"How happy and successful she was in it others can tell better than I. I went once to stay with her at Worcester, and I shall never forget the impression which the School made upon me: it seemed to realise one's ideal of a School, in its worship and its work.

"Canon Butler was never tired of telling me how thankful he was to have her at its head.

"Miss Ottley had paid me a visit at Oxford before beginning her work at Worcester, and I had the happiness of knowing that this was a help to her in the difficult task of organising the Worcester School."

II

Miss Ottley had, indeed, many doubts about her acceptance of the post at Worcester. In a letter to one of her "children," written in 1885, she told how, in her earlier life, she "shrank from girls and detested school-work," and before her Brondesbury experience, she used to maintain that her work lay with individuals rather than with numbers, and that the organisation of a school was not in her line. The very idea of a High School, too, had been distasteful to her, but the month at Oxford in 1877 had, as has already been seen, done something to dispel this, and the experience gained both there and at Brondesbury, had given her an insight into the qualities needed for the work that lay before her.

It is significant that two other Head-mistress-ships were also offered to her about this time.

She used to tell how, shortly after the offer of Worcester had been made to her, she was asked by Canon Butler to go to Wantage, and stayed a night at St. Mary's Home, very shy and frightened, being interviewed, and, as she felt, inspected by the sisters there. No word was said about Worcester during the visit, but when they were in the train returning to London, and she was declaring her incapability and unfitness for the post, Canon Butler quietly put out his hand and said, " My dear child, don't you know that you are not the best judge of that ? " And she felt she could say no more.

This was on January 25, 1883. On January 29, Mr. Cleaver wrote to her from Spezia, where he was taking a holiday, as follows :

" One line must go by the early post in reply to your letter of yesterday. I can imagine something of Canon Butler's ' will,' and were the cause a good one, I should be inclined to act as another David in combating him, but I feel that this is not a case for opposition. I have wished, as you know, for some time that some such call might come to you, and now that it has come, I can but hail it with thankfulness. Let, then, this Lent be a time of earnest preparation of heart, of arming yourself with fresh courage for the new work before you. The motto of this [sexagesima] week, ' Most gladly will I glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me,' will be the best to bear in mind. Increased responsibility will help you in deepening the truest humility, that, namely, which does not shrink from work because of felt unworthiness, but which makes that very unworthiness a constant claim on Divine Grace, and lives in the seeking, and in the preserving a thankful memory, of that Grace. . . . You know that my warmest interest, sympathy, and prayer will go with you into the new field of battle and work. I shall like to hear all about it, details, &c., when you have time to tell me of them. And now you will begin to forget the things that are

behind self with all that presses the soul down, anxieties, fears, &c., and to reach out humbly, but with joyous confidence, to the things that are before. May the Holy Ghost daily increase in you His manifold gifts."

Miss Clarke also wrote :

" I do think this offer of Worcester . . . is a call, and I think you must see the hand of God in it, coming, as it does, just after the failure of the hopes we once entertained. I pray that He will guide you to do His will in this thing—that which will be to His greater glory and your own good."

So, in fear and trembling, but in humble reliance upon God, Miss Ottley signified to Canon Butler her readiness to accept the post, and on March 13 sent him her testimonials for consideration by the Council, accompanied by the following note :

" THE MANOR HOUSE, BRONDESBURY,

" March 13, 1883.

" MY DEAR CANON BUTLER,—I enclose such testimonials as I have by me ; and will send the Certificates if you wish it, but they are large to send by post. I have a Cambridge Honour Certificate, First-Class in Groups A, B, and D, with Distinction in five subjects : Divinity, English Literature, French, German, and Political Economy.

" These testimonials are all from parents of my former pupils, or from pupils themselves, except Professor Morley's and the little note from Miss Benson, whose work I took for a few weeks in Oxford.

" But I know well that they greatly over-rate and over-state my powers, so you must take them *cum grano*.

" Faithfully yours,

" ALICE OTTLEY."

Professor Morley's testimonial ran thus :

" I certify that Miss Alice Ottley has been during the last two sessions (1874-75, 1875-76), one of the very best students in the evening classes of English Language and Literature, held at University College, for the London Ladies' Educational Association. In the Evening Literature Class last session, there were a hundred and fourteen students, among whom Miss Ottley obtained the first place at the examinations, and she was bracketed first with other ladies in an examination of the Language Class. Miss Alice Ottley is not merely a hard worker ; she is also a lady of high culture, with breadth of knowledge, unusual natural ability and energy of character. The evening classes of English Language and Literature in which she has obtained high distinction at University College, are attended chiefly by ladies who are engaged during the day in teaching, and Miss Ottley is herself a teacher with right feeling, and most hearty liking, for the work. I believe that she would be exceptionally valuable as Head-mistress of a High School for Girls.

" HENRY MORLEY."

Miss Benson wrote :

" How can I thank you enough for all the trouble you have taken for me ? I am more than grateful to you. Everything you have done has been just as good as it could be. Thank you. . . ."

Miss Clarke also wrote :

" *March 13, 1883.*

" DEAR CANON BUTLER,—You already know how highly I think of Miss Ottley, and that I believe her to be in every way capable of filling the important post of Head-mistress in the Girls' High School which you and others are thinking of forming in Worcester, with satisfaction to all parties concerned in it.

"Miss Ottley, as you know, is a person of high mental powers and cultivation; and, more important still, she is an excellent teacher. She has the power of imparting knowledge and of calling out the intelligence and interest of her pupils in a marked way.

"She has been a fellow-worker with us for two years, therefore I am able to speak from experience.

"She is a first-rate linguist, and has a fund of general knowledge which fits her in no common degree for the post of Head-mistress. We shall be truly sorry to lose her valuable assistance, and must congratulate any school that is so fortunate as to secure her for its head.—Believe me, dear Canon Butler, yours sincerely,

"MARGARET CLARKE."

On March 30, during a visit to the Deanery at Worcester, Miss Ottley's formal election by the Council took place, and in April she paid a second visit, accompanied by Miss Bishop, and stayed at Canon Butler's house in the Close. On this occasion Miss Beale of Cheltenham was invited by Lady Alwyne Compton to inspect the school buildings, and history records that when the party, including Miss Ottley, Miss Bishop, and Lady Alwyne, reached Britannia House, they found the door locked, and, headed by Canon Butler, the ladies made their entrance through the office window.

Lady Alwyne Compton, who herself played no small part in establishing the High School and making it known both in city and county, has supplied the following recollections:

"'Time hath, my Lord, a wallet at his back
Wherein he puts alms for oblivion.'

"So Shakespeare wrote, but the wallet was never so rapidly filled as now, when we rush along. Tossing all memories into it, I find myself (at eighty-three) almost the only one who remembers Worcester with no High

School for girls, and Britannia House only as a dignified relic of the past.

"I am seeing now how quickly history is made, and how much it is at the mercy of carelessness and inaccuracy. I find that few remember that Dean Church was the mainspring of the revival of St. Paul's, and few, even at Worcester, know that they owe the High School and Miss Ottley to Canon Butler.

"'Butler of Wantage' was a magic name in those days, and he was one of those who,

'gifted with extraordinary powers,
Bear yet a temperate will and keep the course.'

"Those who do nothing and those who do a great deal have only the same time to do it in. He never 'did nothing.' He made Wantage from an ordinary place into a great centre of education with religion as its backbone, and planted it so deeply that it continues still; and as soon as he came to Worcester as a stranger, he planned the school. In a few weeks, I might almost say days, he made friends with everybody and won their help.

"The place was chosen—the house was taken—and still remains the calm and dignified entrance to the many buildings that have been generously added.

"He crowned all by choosing Miss Ottley as the first Head-mistress.

"She looked so gentle and fragile that we thought she could not be equal to the work, but we soon found that in her gentleness lay her strength, and its influence was felt by all who saw her.

"On the twenty-first anniversary of the opening of the school, I was behind her at the door when she received the old and new girls who crowded to her garden party, and saw her face reflected in those of all who spoke to her.

"I have no more to say. The history of the school can be given by many.

"They know the flowers of which I know the root: and we all have loved in her 'that chastened humility which is the acme of human wisdom.'"

III

A great deal of setting in order was necessary at Britannia House before it was ready for use as a school, and to this Canon Butler gave much time and attention, carefully superintending all the arrangements, even to the minutest details. Miss Ottley's time was also fully occupied in engaging her assistant-mistresses, buying school furniture, and making the other necessary preparations.

With the help of Canon Butler, the school prospectus was formulated ; and together they drew up the school prayers, a short office for morning, midday, and the end of afternoon school.

For the school badge Miss Ottley chose a Virgin lily, with the motto, "The white flower of a blameless life." For many years no girl in the upper forms left the High School without having committed to memory Tennyson's "Dedication" to the *Idylls of the King*, in which those words are found. All who have heard Miss Ottley read and interpret the *Idylls* know how strongly the description of Prince "Albert the Good" appealed to her loyal nature, and she longed that this now familiar passage should have its share in forming the ideals of the young lives entrusted to her care.

For the school colours she chose white and blue. It was natural that, with the purity of the Virgin lily, white should be associated as one of the school colours, and Miss Ottley's reasons for her choice of blue, will be found in the following letter, written April 18, 1912, to one of her Old Girls, herself a teacher in a large girls' school :

"I have found, I think, the answer to your question in better form than I could now write it, so I will send

you the volume of *White and Blue* in which is E. C——'s Prize Essay on 'blue.'

"So far as I can recall it, my main reason for adopting the colour was the fact that it signified, by God's own teaching, that every Jew was one of God's chosen people—see Num. xv. 37-40—and that undoubtedly our LORD's garment had a 'border' of blue—the 'hem' which conveyed His divine power to the sick, if they might but touch it.

"The robe of the ephod of the priest was blue, as was the priest's mitre, and the lace that attached it; and the hangings of the court of the tabernacle.

"So that undoubtedly it was a sacred colour, although much of the symbolism is rather far-fetched.

"But our own Chaucer makes Canace line the 'mew' of her bird with 'blew' in sign of 'truth that is in woman seen.'

"Tennyson makes it the colour of hope in his three queens; Keble speaks of 'the glorious sky embracing all,' as 'like the Maker's love.'

"The old artists also very commonly chose blue for the Blessed Virgin's dress, and at any rate most of us think of her in Albertinelli's 'Salutation,' in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, as the ideal Madonna.

"The rest of the 'Essay' is chiefly irrelevant, but I think this is enough to explain why one naturally thought of blue."

At the beginning of May, Miss Ottley paid the short visit to Oxford mentioned by Miss Bishop, and in June she came to Worcester to settle into her new life.

On June 18, 1883, a large garden-party, the first of many such pleasant gatherings, was given by the Council at Britannia House; it was attended by all the city and county magnates, the parents of the prospective pupils, and the pupils themselves. A warm welcome was given to Miss Ottley, who charmed the guests by her gentle

dignity and gracious presence. Great satisfaction was expressed with the house, which was thrown open for inspection.

Three days later, on June 21, a party of ten children arrived, in a state of somewhat trembling anticipation, for the beginning of their school life. They, with Miss Ottley and her little band of fellow-workers, assembled in the room later known as the "Preparatory," and here school was opened by Canon Butler with a short office of prayer, Lord and Lady Alwyne Compton, Mrs. Butler, and a few other friends and well-wishers, being also present. Canon Butler gave a short address inspiring that small nucleus of the Worcester High School with high thoughts and strong purpose, and setting them on their way determined to lay its foundations deep and strong on the bedrock of loyalty and truth.

For Miss Ottley, that morning was the opening of a fresh era in her life, the beginning of what she afterwards recognised as the life-work to which God had called her, and, in the words of one who was present, "she not only prayed for the school that morning, but gave up her entire self to it, and as time went on seemed to be always giving more and more and *more*."

The ten girls present that first eventful day were shortly joined by another, and these had the honour of being the "First XI" of the Worcester High School, or "First Brood," as Miss Ottley called them. To them was given, under Miss Ottley, the responsibility of setting the tone and forming the tradition for all those who should come after, and right loyally they strove to fulfil the ideals which she set before them. To the end of her life, her "First XI" had their own special warm corner in Miss Ottley's heart. For some time, until the separations of life made it impossible for them all to meet, there were yearly "First Brood Expeditions" to



MISS OTTLEY AND HER "FIRST BROOD"

Maud Chesshire, Miss Perks, Muriel Chesshire, Florence Buck, Miss M. Douglas, Jennie Beale, Miss Crump, Blanche Beale
 Beatrice Sharpe, Henrietta Sheppard, Sybil Carr, Miss Ottley, Ethel Abell, Florence Abell, Kathleen Abell.

commemorate the school's birthday, delightful days spent at Tewkesbury, Stratford-on-Avon, Oxford, and other places of interest.

Those early school-days live in the memories of those who are left of the "First Brood" as days of unclouded happiness. The novelty of it! They enjoyed every new experience—the pigeon-holes and pegs in the cloak-room, the desks in the class-rooms, the buns and milk at eleven o'clock, even the rule of silence, which made the fifteen minutes' relaxation in the middle of the morning such a delight. And the central figure of it all, with her bluest of blue eyes and winning smile, and her "Good-morning, my children," as she came in to prayers every morning; the instinctive feeling that she loved them; the reverence with which she inspired them from the first moment, while yet they knew that nothing was too small or too trivial for her to share with them; her ready understanding of their joys and sorrows!—all this made them feel that they were indeed her "children." One of them still cherishes the memory of a new doll brought from London to replace the poor broken one, over which she had been found weeping one day, and the warmth of the comfort which wiped away the tears.

And then the treats she gave them! Strawberries from her garden at eleven o'clock lunch-time, stories of her childhood during dinner, and reading afterwards, till it was time to disappear for afternoon "Preparation." And the plans they laid at home to justify them in staying to dinner; the excuses they invented to come on Saturdays and tap at the office-door!

Miss Ottley was a born ruler, and the building up of the High School afforded abundant scope for the exercise of her remarkable powers of organisation. But

from first to last a sense of restfulness and peace pervaded the house, even on the busiest days.

The atmosphere which she created for little children had in it something of the "Heaven" which "lies about us in our infancy." They were always happy with her, always good. "Oh, mummy," said a small kindergarten boy after her death, "next to you and daddy, Miss Ottley is the nicest person in all the world." Two little girls were overheard one day discussing the joys of school, and their love for certain of their teachers. "I do like Miss ——," said one, "and I love Miss ——," said the other. "But not like Miss *Ottley*," came the emphatic rejoinder. And another little girl in the kindergarten said, "I call Tuesday 'happy Tuesday,' because Miss Ottley comes to tell us stories on that day."

The "First Brood" varied in age from eight to fifteen, but they too experienced something of the same happiness when they came into the sunshine of her presence. They found, too, that by her own attractiveness she made goodness attractive to them—a revelation to some who had been accustomed to its sterner puritanical aspect.

Not that she ever consciously attracted them to herself; as with the girls in her home at Hampstead, so with all the generations of her Worcester children, she pointed them on beyond herself, upwards to Him who was the very Life of her life. Those words of St. Paul's, "We preach not ourselves but CHRIST JESUS the LORD," occurring in the Gospel for the day of her funeral,¹ seemed to strike the keynote of all her dealings with others. "It was through knowing her love that I first came to know what God's Love meant," is the testimony given by one to what many have experienced.

¹ St. Matthew's Day, 1912.

"Our LORD JESUS CHRIST is the Head-master of this school," was a phrase that was often on her lips.

And it was an atmosphere in which the children felt stimulated to do their best. Quick to penetrate the crust of shyness, she always seemed to see in her children God's ideal for each, and this was what she sought to foster. Moreover, she inspired them with the desire to rise to the fulfilment of that ideal. Very quickly her "First Brood" perceived that nothing but their best was acceptable to her, that nothing mean or second-rate could have any place in the work of the High School. Yet they felt also that she made the largest allowances for them, and that their very faults and failings were hidden under the shelter of her love. She could hate the wrong-doing, (indeed, who that has seen it can ever forget the way in which those blue eyes flashed with righteous indignation against sin in any form?) yet love the wrong-doer, and, in loving her, win her to repentance, reparation, and amendment.

Lessons became an absorbing interest to the "First Brood," especially those which were given by Miss Ottley. She taught many subjects during those early days, and into each she infused vitality and freshness. Her lessons on the history of words, especially of Greek derivatives, were a special delight to the children, and afforded abundant scope for the drawing forth of treasures from the wealth of her cultivated mind.

And Miss Ottley herself, whose inborn sense of duty and obedience to authority had brought her to Worcester, had her reward in finding her reluctance gradually vanish as she took her "First Brood" to her heart, and as she gained the confidence and affection of their parents, and of those many others who, won by the charm of her personality, sought to make her feel at home amongst them.

Her letter, already quoted, continues : " God has shown me that my life is to be spent with and for girls and in school-work ; and I love both dearly." And in September, 1888, she wrote from Pontresina, where she had spent her summer holiday : " The thought of being back in dear old Worcester is quite delightful to me ; I have had quite enough of a life with nothing that *must* be done, and long to see my children's faces again."

APPENDIX I

The following recollections, contributed by Miss Hitchcock, cover the whole period of Alice Ottley's work at Worcester, but they may be fittingly inserted at this point.

Miss Hitchcock writes :

" Miss Ottley's name was suggested for the post at Worcester in the first instance, I believe, by Miss Bishop, then Head-mistress of the Oxford High School, whom Canon Butler took into his counsels on the subject. I recollect meeting him by chance in her rooms in Oxford, and hearing her say to him as I entered, ' Here is someone who can tell you more of Miss Ottley than I can.' I heard then for the first time of the projected school, and did not hesitate to say with a confidence that was, for once, justifiable, ' Of course if you can get Miss Ottley, your school will be a success,' and I well remember Dr. Butler's reply, ' We *must* get Miss Ottley.'

" Worcester, it seemed to me, was made for her, and she for Worcester. A Cathedral city would always have had a strong attraction for her, and once thoroughly settled there, she felt completely at home. Again, the very definite position taken by the founder of the school from the outset, was entirely in harmony with her own views. She could never, as she herself said, have been Head-mistress of any but a Church school, but she did

not judge, much less condemn, those who took a different line. She knew that she could not do her best work, nor in fact be herself, under conditions that she felt would have hampered her in it. Teaching, for her, was not one among many ways of earning a living—it was a vocation, and one of the highest and noblest of vocations. Hers was a dedicated life, and it could only be lived in closest connexion with the Church which she loved and longed to serve. To give religious teaching that was not definitely and avowedly Church teaching, would have been to her to mutilate the truth committed to her charge,—it would have been an act of disloyalty, and therefore unthinkable and impossible. Her position in this matter was always well understood in the Head-mistresses' Association, of which she was for so long an honoured member. Religious teaching, we all knew, was first in order of importance in her mind, and so it came first in the school Time-table. No other subject was allowed to encroach on what she considered to be its paramount claims. The high standard soon reached by her school, and her own personality, gave weight to her opinions at our meetings, and in this particular question of religious teaching, her views were always heard with interest, if not always with unmixed approval.

“I saw less of her at those conferences than I should have liked, for she used them as opportunities for making acquaintance with Head-mistresses whom she did not meet at other times. Some, too, there were, young Head-mistresses, who had been trained under her, and to whom the chance of even a few words with her was too precious to be missed.

“Of the work at Worcester I do not feel competent to speak in detail. Strangely enough, my recollections of her there, though more recent, are far less distinct than of the Hampstead days. But I paid her several short visits there, once in the spring, when the scent of violets was everywhere, and the city was framed in the snowy blossoms of its orchards, and once in early June, when she gave herself up to me for a whole long afternoon, and we drove between hedges wreathed with

wild roses, and through some of the most prosperous and picturesque of English villages. Again, I remember one long, peaceful Sunday, beginning with the early celebration in the Church close to the school, at which many of her staff and elder girls were present, and ending with the quiet pacing of her garden walks, as the flowers grew dim in the twilight, and we talked or were silent, as only old friends can be together.

"I saw the school at various stages of its growth, and was struck, as everyone must have been, with the finish of every detail in the building and in the internal organisation. No slovenliness, no scamping, no makeshifts could be or were tolerated. The environment of her "children," as she loved to call them, might be simple, but it should be as beautiful, as perfectly adapted to its purpose, as care and thought could make it. It was the same in the work that she required of them. It was not, I think, by her that I first heard it said, 'Things that are done for God should be done so cleanly,' but it was the spirit in which all within the walls of her school was done.

"At Worcester, as at Hampstead, no thought of sparing herself seemed to enter her mind. Her day was full, yet without any sense of hurry or rush. The peace in which she dwelt never seemed to be broken, however sudden or unexpected the calls on her might be. The needs of others, rather than her own, were always before her. In my first visit to her at Worcester I was dismayed to find her, after a hard morning's work, presiding at the school dinner, carving for the girls, looking after their wants, and after dinner watching their play, or other occupations, in the school garden. To my remonstrances, and suggestions that such duties might be delegated to her staff, she said it was good for them to have the interval of rest; and she welcomed such opportunities of getting to know the girls. That a still harder afternoon's work of interviewing parents, or taking special lessons, lay before her did not seem to occur to her. Truly with her, to be Head was to be 'servant of all,' but in justice to the devoted fellow-workers whom she gathered round her, it must be said

that they learned to spare her in all ways in which she would allow herself to be spared, and were as ungrudging in their service of the school as she was herself.

"As time went on, and Alice's circle widened year by year, and she responded freely to the increasing claims upon her, it might have seemed that older friendships were in danger of being forgotten. But this was never the case. Knowledge of the many burdens that were cast upon her might make one hesitate to add one's own, but she had the true instinct of friendship that does not wait for an appeal. 'Could I know you were in trouble and not come to you?' she said once when I exclaimed in surprise at her unexpected appearance. It was this spontaneity of sympathy, the inexhaustible loving-kindness of a strong, beautiful nature, freed from all thought of self, that made her no impossible image of perfection, but one of the most loveable, as well as most saintly, of women."

II

From Miss Day, late Head-mistress of the Grey Coat School, Westminster:

"It was my privilege to be honoured by Alice Ottley's friendship from 1873 to the time of her death. We met first as fellow-students at the English Literature lectures, given at University College, Gower St., under the auspices of a long-forgotten body, 'The Ladies' Association for promoting the Higher Education of Women.' The College Authorities looked askance at us. It was due mainly to Professor Morley, the Professor of English Language and Literature, that we were even tolerated.

"Always a 'dreamer of dreams,' and a 'seer of visions,' she naturally had much to suffer from the less single-hearted, less 'other-worldly' people than herself. She dreamt of a teaching Sisterhood, the members of which should wear no distinctive habit, but live in the world

the regulated life of Religion. An attempt was made to carry out the dream, but it was found impracticable.

"The foundation of the Society of the Holy Name belongs, I believe, to that time. That Society, which binds together many Churchwomen engaged in teaching, was dear, very dear to her till her life's end.

"From the time of her call to the Headship of Worcester High School, a call which her humility led her to accept with great simplicity, she was absorbed in her work, never limiting it to mere school work, but promoting in every way in her power the educational, moral, and spiritual progress of the city. She greatly esteemed 'citizenship,' having a high view of its responsibilities.

"As a member of the Association of Head-mistresses she was not a very frequent speaker; she realised that the conditions necessary in some schools were impossible in others, and dreaded any attempt to bring about uniformity. When religious training was discussed, we were sure to hear something from her that was inspiring and helpful, but more than once her quiet assertion of what she felt was right, led to rather firm disagreement.

"No one who knew Alice can have failed to see in her face a certain reflected light, a light which comes only from the vision of God, which shines forth when God and goodness are spoken of. Her love of beauty in nature, art, literature, or music all had the same source, all came to her from God, and drew her to Him.

"The one word, which to my mind describes her best, is 'single-hearted.' As one reverently thanks God for her and her work, one seems to hear her saying, 'Thou hast fulfilled my heart's desire; mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of Hosts.' "

CHAPTER IV

THE INNER LIFE OF THE SCHOOL.

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam.

BEGINNING thus with "a day of small things," Alice Ottley's work at the High School rapidly developed. Easter, 1884, was marked by the birth of the kindergarten, in Miss Ottley's eyes "the prettiest and brightest part of the school." By June, 1885, the school, now two years old, numbered one hundred and twenty-five, and already considerable additions had been made to Britannia House, including the kindergarten room, with the Head-mistress's sitting-room above, and the large hall, which, from the day of its dedication, September 15, 1884, was the centre of the corporate life of the school; its meeting-place for prayers, for speech-days, concerts and other gatherings.

In this chapter an attempt must be made to describe the inner life of the school,—that which has made it a power for God in the "Faithful City"¹ itself, and far beyond its boundaries.

¹ This title, earned by the citizens of Worcester, for their loyalty to the English Crown, was first bestowed in 1042, when, having resisted the collection of the hated Danegeld, their bishop, Lyfing, helped Earl Godwin to place Edward the Confessor on the throne.

I

And first *the School Prayers*.

The daily work of the school was set in a round of daily worship. The joyous note of praise in the threefold Gloria, the psalm and hymn of the morning office, set the tone for the day, while the versicle and response,

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might,”

“That God in all things may be glorified,”

struck the keynote of its whole intention—eager, strenuous service to the glory of God.¹ The very short office at midday, with its memorial of the Passion, renewed the intention, and evening prayers, at 4 P.M., with Creed, Confession, and Thanksgiving, completed the round.

Intercession had its due place in the morning prayers, and the children’s belief in the power of prayer became very real, when, led by Miss Ottley, they offered, morning after morning, petitions on behalf of some member or friend of the school suffering from illness, or remembered other special needs, whether of Church or nation, or of individual people, before God. The whole history of the school shows how abundantly these prayers were answered.

Miss Ottley was extremely particular about the recital of the daily prayers. Her own example of devotion and of profound reverence in worship, the very way she said the prayers, carried with it a sense of the awe of the Divine presence, and she would have every detail of this special offering to God as nearly perfect as possible. The prayer-desk was to be beautifully kept, with flowers renewed each morning; the movements, kneeling and rising, were to be “as one man”; the responses, ringing

¹ For Friday morning there was a different office, of a penitential character.

and firm as from one voice ; the Amens (as in early Christian worship), "like a clap of thunder." The hymns and chants were carefully chosen and practised in the singing classes ; and the staff, who quickly caught the spirit of their Head, spared no pains in helping her to create the school tradition of joyous, reverent worship.

II

This leads to the consideration of Miss Ottley's *relations with her staff*.

From their first entrance into the High School her mistresses were essentially her fellow-workers, and as such her valued friends. The standard of life which she set before them as teachers may be given in her own words from a letter to an early member of her staff. After mentioning some other matters, she continued :

"Now, may I add a few words as a friend who loves you ; as a fellow-teacher who has always had, and has still, strong faults of character to struggle against ; and may I add this from an experience dearly bought by constant failure—we can never raise our children to a higher standard than we aim at ourselves ; what we are, not what we say, will mould their characters ; the One All-holy Teacher said of His taught ones, 'For their sakes I sanctify Myself' ; shall we not, for their sakes whom we teach, and for His sake, sanctify ourselves ? Self-discipline, self-repression, a real humility founded on self-knowledge, are the necessary preparation for disciplining others.

"Do not think that I say one word of all this to you that I do not with greatly added emphasis say to myself : the terrible humiliation of Monday¹ was the ghastly contrast between what people said and perhaps thought,

¹ There had been a formal opening of school the previous Monday, when Canon Butler "said a few words."

and what God knows and I know of myself and of my life. But at least they told us what we ought to be, what we must strive to be, by His unfailing help. I think you will forgive me for writing thus ; I should only do it to one whom I wholly love and trust."

Again, to quote from a letter written some years later to one of her student mistresses :

" I cannot but feel that you have that special ' charisma,' which points to teaching in some form as your vocation ; but it is such a tremendously high vocation, that it must involve some reflection of the Master's Self-sacrifice ; and in so far as He calls us to be fellow-workers with Him, He also calls us to a special sanctity ; because it is what we are that is the real influence on others."

The following extract from the same letter will show the importance which she attached to daily acts of self-denial, as a part of the preparation for a teacher's life. From childhood she had schooled herself to strict punctuality with regard to early rising :

" I am sure that you need plenty of sleep, but I think that, with resolute purpose, you can train yourself to gain this by getting into bed half-an-hour earlier—which is an act of self-denial, excellent and bracing in itself—rather than by staying in bed in the morning, which is a demoralising self-indulgence ; and both morning and evening prayers would gain immeasurably. . . .

" I trust that you will realise that this side of the training is incomparably more important than the intellectual one, and that in voluntarily coming to Worcester, you accepted the highest ideal of self-preparation."

It was Miss Ottley's lifelong instinct to trust entirely those with whom she had to do, and only very slowly

and sadly did she learn that her trust was not always justified. Her staff quickly felt that she did "wholly love and trust" them, and this led to the very happy relationship that existed between herself and them. By inviting them to meals, Sunday breakfast after the early service, tea or dinner, either with herself alone, or to meet her guests; by seeking their company when she went to pay distant calls; and by other means she came to know them intimately, and they learned to love and revere her in no ordinary way.

A student, who came to the High School in later years, has said that "probably one great cause of its wonderful atmosphere was the devotion of the staff to their Head, and the utter confidence with which she responded to their affection."

But besides the personal friendship with each, there was, of course, her relation to them as Head-mistress, and here her own example of untiring work and single-hearted devotion, combined with the trust which she reposed in them, called forth of their best. Not that her position as Head was always an easy one; there were occasions when staff as well as children were made to feel the severity of her love, when very plain speaking was necessary, but this was always done with the utmost patience and humility, none but herself knowing what such occasions cost her. Week by week she gathered her mistresses round her after Monday's school was over, to discuss matters of importance in the life of the school. At these meetings, though seldom seeming to dictate, she imbued her staff with her own tender concern for the welfare, body, soul and spirit, of each separate child committed by her to them, especially commending to their respect and reverence "the duller, the less interesting, those that have strong faults, or special difficulties to contend against." So

only, in her opinion, would these learn to respect themselves, and to aim at and reach a high standard.

She possessed the faculty of seeing what went on in the life of the school without appearing to watch very closely, and her mistresses were often amazed as she laid her finger on the weak spots in themselves and their doings, and then gently and helpfully pointed them to "a more excellent way."

While keeping a firm hand on the reins, she yet allowed her staff complete freedom to work on their own lines. She laid stress on the need of unity of aim without requiring uniformity of method, and they felt that they had in their Head a strong, courageous and sympathetic leader, on whose wise judgment they could unhesitatingly rely, and to whom they could turn in all the doubts and difficulties of their own or of their school-life.

A delightful part of the mistresses' meeting was the hour in which, after the necessary business was completed, Miss Ottley read aloud to her staff while they did needlework. Latham's *Pastor Pastorum*, Milligan's *The Ascension and Heavenly Priesthood of our Lord*, the Life of George Romanes, Skrine's *Pastor Agnorum*, are some of the books which they had the privilege of enjoying with her; while her exquisite reading of Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, interpreting as she read, will never be forgotten by those who heard it. During the last sixteen years, the meeting ended with a short office of intercession, at which special needs of the school and of individuals were remembered.

III

The Monday mistresses' meeting was followed by the Tuesday "*mark-reading*," which occupied the first half-hour after morning prayers. It was a lesson to staff and

children alike to hear Miss Ottley read and comment on the marks gained or lost the week before, bestowing praise or blame where each was due, the latter always with sorrow, but with encouragement, and an appeal to what was best in the nature of the child.

"Lost marks" were of two kinds—first, for lack of order, the failure to keep the minor rules, by which the ideal of perfection in small matters was kept before the school. Largely faults of omission, these were not very serious in themselves, yet obedience to the rules helped to cultivate habits of self-control and loyalty.

The other "lost mark" was of a very serious nature, a "conduct-mark," given only for real wrong-doing.

After reading the marks, Miss Ottley used, for many years, to make criticisms on the handwriting in the exercise-books of a whole form, which had been sent up to her for inspection. On Fridays, week by week, when school was over, it was her custom to look through, with each form-mistress, the exercise-books of her own form, a very valuable experience for the mistress, and one of the ways in which she herself learnt to know and understand the characters of the individual children.

From the very first Miss Ottley emphasized the importance of neatness in all kinds of handiwork. Canon Butler also laid stress on neat handwriting, and used to say that the spirit of obedient submission to school principles was shown in the careful handwriting of the children.

Much merriment was caused on Tuesday mornings by Miss Ottley's criticisms of the writing. Sometimes she would write upon the black-board some strange-looking hieroglyph which she had copied exactly from one of the exercise-books, and which, apart from its context, utterly defied identification. "What do you suppose that is?" she would say. "Well, it is meant for —,"

and her beautifully and carefully made letters would be put side by side with their perversion, revealing the smallness, and yet the greatness, of the difference between them. Every letter was to have its own distinctive shape, and was to be formed with care. "Capital 'A's' are not to be small 'a's' grown up," she often said, and "an 's' unclosed is a sign of sloth."

Often the mark-reading ended with a short "talk." Many are the lessons, indelibly impressed on the minds of her hearers, which she drew, as a rule, from some incident in the life of the school, perhaps from the errors discovered in the exercise-books, or disclosed at the mistresses' meeting the night before; lessons in courtesy, and everyday manners, which she considered so important. "You are princesses in the Court of Heaven," she would say, "and must behave as such."

The language of the Worcester High School was to be as "Court language," the outcome of refined, reverent minds; such a thing as slang was not to be tolerated. The children were to show by their demeanour, even by the way in which they walked about both inside the school and out, that they were true gentlewomen, daughters of the King of kings. She would have her school to be "the gentlest school in England."

In the very early days the girls walked about the High School with their arms crossed behind their backs (a custom borrowed from the Oxford High School), but this was dropped before long, and a natural, easy, but controlled way of walking, with hands by their sides, arms never swinging, never touching the bannisters as they went up and downstairs, was cultivated.

The rule of "silence, except in recreation time," was a great help towards self-control and recollectedness.

The children loved the Tuesday morning "talks";

Miss Ottley's sense of humour, her fund of anecdotes and happy way of telling them, the vigour and freshness with which she would say the same thing over and over again on different occasions but always in a different way, helped to keep them alert and ready to respond happily to what she required of them.

The first and last days of the term were always marked by special "talks." Many a laugh was raised as Miss Ottley read and commented on the school rules for the benefit of the new girls on the opening day, and she always sent them away from the "break-up" with some special thought for the holidays. The chief thing that she strove for in these days of growing disregard for parents and neglect of home, was to turn out good, unselfish home-daughters. "My work would be a miserable failure indeed," she wrote to one of her girls, "if it should not make my children better daughters, more kind and thoughtful and unselfish in their home-life, as well as more gentle, cultured, and refined."

She spoke of the importance of the home in the sight of God ; how each of us is born into, and begins life in, a home, and how, therefore, home is the first place for the fulfilment of our vocation to be saints. (She was fond of reiterating that in Baptism each one of us was "called to be a saint.") "To be a good home-daughter," she would say, "involves self-sacrifice ; it means giving up self-will, in cheerful loving deference to the wills of parents and of others set in authority ; but then 'our wills are ours to make them Thine,' and while you are young, God's will is shown for you in the wills of those who are set over you."¹ For the elder girls,

¹ One of her Old Girls, in recalling the impression made upon them, as children, by her teaching on the duty of obedience and deference to elders and those set in authority, adds, "Yet in

those who were going home to younger brothers and sisters, perhaps to babies in the nursery, she would point out the duty of loving care for the little ones. The girl who would stay at home to help in keeping good some fractious little brother or sister, would find more real happiness, she said, than the girl who would go off on an expedition, mindful only of her own so-called pleasure. "The best cure for selfishness is to do the opposite to what we like in little things, and to see CHRIST'S Cross there."

Stern she could be, and in no measured terms would she express her abhorrence of anything approaching disloyalty, or malicious criticism of others, as the following notes of one of her end-of-term "talks," found among her papers after her death, will show :

"At the risk of not reading all the marks I would, I must first speak of something which has made me very unhappy this term ; an evil, a danger has sprung up and spread like an infection through the school, sapping its old, frank loyalty, threatening to make it the very opposite of all that I have striven to have it, of all that it was ten years ago.

"Many of you know what it is—an insolent, disloyal criticising and discussing of mistresses. Yes, many cheeks would burn if I told all I knew ; it is grievous that those who would be ashamed to hear the words repeated were bold to utter them. I care not whether it be for praise or blame, it is the *fact* of criticising which is so bad. It does not harm the mistresses, but it does harm yourselves.

"Don't tell me it is done in other schools ; this is not 'other schools' ; it is the Worcester High School,

our later years she never hesitated to recognise that our vocation as individuals might constitute an even greater claim upon us. Some of us have, I know, been so wisely helped by her to maintain the true relationship between filial loyalty and obedience to the call of God."

where such a thing would have been impossible ten years ago.

"I know it is the spirit of the age—that is only saying it is the spirit of the world, and you have renounced the world in your Baptism and at your Confirmation. You know how difficult it is to say what that means, but it certainly means not accepting the world's standard of right and wrong in this matter. And yet even in this world you know how the critical, censorious woman is dreaded and hated, and she thoroughly deserves it, for the habit is odious, and springs from an evil root, from self-conceit and irreverence.

"For who has a right to judge another? Only his superior. Therefore when you judge you are asserting that you are superior, and where is the Christian rule, 'Let each esteem other better than himself?'

"So, I pray you, let it cease at once.

"Elder girls, do not be afraid to be silent when you are with those who are tearing to pieces someone's character; dare to say something kind, or to be thought not clever enough to pass judgment on others. Stop it, if you hear younger ones beginning it.

"This solemn Advent-tide reminds us that our words are making our own future judgment. 'By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.' 'Judge not, that ye be not judged, for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged'; and if for every idle word we must give account, how much more for every censorious word.

"How happy, how proud I should be, if it might be said of Worcester High School girls that they are known never to criticise anyone—their clothes—their appearance—their character. Don't begin with the clothes (a subject of conversation really below contempt), or you will be very likely to go on to the others."

The subject of "debt" was another which aroused Miss Ottley's wrath. Any slackness about payment of debts which came to her ears brought forth scathing words of condemnation. "If you fail to pay your dress-

maker's bill you are either a pauper or a thief," she would say.

Those who have heard such "talks" as these will recall the sting of the tone in which certain words were uttered. Miss Ottley's power to rebuke was indeed tremendous. Again and again not a little of her strength lay in her quick perception of the distinction between right and wrong, and her absolutely uncompromising attitude towards the latter. "Oh! how she denounced evil," writes one who was on her staff for many years, "and things that led to evil, though often unrecognised till her piercing insight laid them open. I know we sometimes thought she exaggerated the importance of small wrong-doings; but I have partly realised since how she saw them on the scale of the lives she was dealing with; and not only so, but also in relation to their development into bigger sins as the lives grew larger."

Other short notes of "talks" run as follows:

"Obedience means giving up our wills without being made to do so; yielding to the counter will of others in everything except where it is a matter of right and wrong—not of our own rights—but of right towards God."

"All temper—violent or sulky—is selfish annoyance because our will is crossed. Life all through will be smoothed and gladdened if we begin early not to be annoyed when our own selfish will is crossed. 'Why do ye not rather take wrong'? And often it is no wrong, but our own self-will is to blame; and too often 'ye do wrong and defraud.'"

"Helping others is like playing dominoes. If your opponent puts down two, don't put six, but two."

"Take the distasteful thing from which you shrink. Jesus put forth His hand and touched the leper."

THE INNER LIFE OF THE SCHOOL 75

Writing of Miss Ottley's talks to the assembled school an Old Girl says :

" I can still hear her voice ringing out as it often did with the words, ' Can't !—there should be no such word in the language,' and still it heartens me up and makes me go ahead against difficulties as it did then. And again, I can hear her quoting, ' Cease to do evil, learn to do well,' and feel her carrying it into our daily experience, by insisting upon the correction of all mistakes in our former exercises before starting upon the new one. Or I can hear her scathing contempt of all sickly sentimentality, as she taught us to be good, sincere, sensible friends of the best sort ; but, above all, she talked to us of all the things of ' good report,' making us see the beauty of goodness and holiness, and so teaching us to turn from and shun all forms of evil, yet never soiling our minds by insistence upon its horrors."

And another writes :

" Miss Ottley's words about Church-going are a vivid recollection in my mind ;—that one was always to conform to the rules and usages of a strange church, and not to take an outside seat and make people uncomfortable by having to pass them. The same principle held good in what she said about manners—that her girls were never to be conspicuous, but always ready either to help or to ' take a back seat,' as occasion required. I remember, too, her great dislike of seeing girls in towns with walking-sticks, and always think of it when I see them."

IV

The great festivals and fasts of the Church's year, as they came round, were always the occasion of some special teaching, applicable both to the personal life and to the work of the children. Saints' days were marked by dancing instead of the formal drill ; Fridays

by prayers of a penitential character, including a metrical litany and penitential psalm.

The spring term, including Lent and the yearly Confirmation, was always a time of special growth in the life of the school. Miss Ottley's ideal for the use of Lent, set each year before her children in one form or another, will be seen from the following notes, also found among her papers :

" Lent—We are all glad it has come. Why ?

" Because we all want to be good, to be better than we have been.

" But because we have had two births, natural and spiritual, we all have two selves ; one, which St. Paul calls the spirit, and one which he calls the flesh. Between these two is our personality, the soul, which is dragged up by the first but down by the second.

" Lent is the time to help us to conquer the flesh and to strengthen the spirit.

" At our second birth we were all set to climb a mountain, the mountain of Holiness ; we cannot see its top, but we know God and Heaven are there, and we have to go up, up, all our life. At first, we were carried by others, but very soon we had to try ourselves to climb it, and now every day is a step—up—or down—or along."

" Sometimes we go along in pleasant grassy places, sloping gently ; but sometimes there come steep bits, when every step is a great pull up. Such a time is Lent—a steep bit wanting all our effort ; but then it is getting us up, and will leave us ever so much higher ; so it is quite worth while.

" We have an alpen-stock—Self-discipline.

" We have a Guide Who is always on in front of us, JESUS, our LORD, and we are to hold on to Him by prayer ; He cannot lead us wrong.

" And, when we are near Him, we must learn to love Him, learn to have a great love for the All-lovely One.

" These forty days are to be spent quietly with Him ; each soul coming as near as possible to Him by frequent prayer ; not by long prayers, but by never being long without prayer, not letting go of His hand ; making frequent little ejaculations, acts of quick penitence, or instant thanks for little joys. Make for yourself some little resolve (and write it down) about prayer ; not asking only, but just speaking to Him in thanks, in love, in hope.

" There is much cant nowadays about independence ; we all want to go our own way. This must just be given up if we are ever to be saints. Our Master lived on earth a life of utter dependence. God, as He was, He never did one independent act ; never chose freely the time when He should do one thing ; in His Humanity, He, moment by moment, did only His Father's will. (To the age of thirty He did Joseph and Mary's will, and then He lived only to do God's will.)

" So, if we want to spend a holy Lent, the first thing is obedience. Consciously resolve to give up your own way—your own will. For you, it is in your parents' will, and the will of those set over you, that you see God's will, so it is quite plain for you. ' No soul was ever lost that was obedient, no soul was ever saved that was not obedient.' "

Miss Ottley always gave her children very practical advice on the subject of their Lenten rule.

The following are her notes of another address given one Shrove Tuesday :

" To-morrow Lent begins ; make your plan to-day ; to-morrow begin to work it.

" First, find out definitely what sin, what evil tendency, you mean to get the better of.

" We all have two natures—a higher, truer self—the Divine image remaining, the Christ-nature imparted—and a lower nature (the flesh)—an animal that must be kept in check, the beast in man.

" To-day we have each to find out our own beast,

nobody else's, and plan some way of crushing it. There are :

- " 1. The raging beast—that flares up unawares.
- " 2. The sulky beast—that broods and grumbles.
- " 3. The greedy beast.
- " 4. The lazy beast.
- " 5. The lying beast.

" Against our own special one we must war, not only negatively but positively.

" *e.g.* 1. The passionate child. Not only resolve not to fly into a rage but resolve to try to speak very gently, lest by chance you should wound another.

" 2. The sulky child. Not only never pout, or pity yourself, but resolve to speak up brightly, to do any nice, kind thing you can for the person who vexes you.

" 3. The greedy, dainty child. Not only never grumble about your food (good manners teach that), but resolve, in Lent, not to eat the things you like best (*e.g.* sweets), at least not to look for them, nor try to get them.

" 4. The idle child. Not only never shirk a bit of work, but resolve to do every little bit perfectly, to get up the instant you are called, and therefore not to sit up self-indulgently at night. It is not more work, but harder work, that we want.

" And all and always for the love of Him with Whom you will try to spend these six weeks ; by His power growing like Him. He is in you, and you may all be saints, unless you grievously fail of what He intends—expects of you. You all will, some day, in the life beyond—the only real life—to which this is the passage, realise that the splendid impossibility is possible : ' Be ye perfect as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' "

Her suggestion for keeping a spirit of recollection during the distractions of school-work in Holy Week was, " When you are going up or downstairs this week, or waiting between classes, you will find it a great help to say in your heart :

' Jesu, my Lord, I Thee adore,
O make me love Thee more and more.' "

And fragmentary notes show how, one year at the end of Lent, when school was breaking up for the Easter holidays, she spoke of the Easter gift of peace—peace in the great forty days, won by the consciousness of our LORD's near presence; and went on to remind the children of "one special danger which disturbs home peace—the want of gentle courtesy at home; the danger of intimacy destroying courtesy; of rough, hasty words only to one's brothers and sisters; angry, impatient tones when something crosses one's will; wounding gentle natures and sensitive hearts." She urged them to be careful lest relaxation should turn to laxity; to avoid late hours night and morning, lest prayers should be hurried and the whole day suffer. "In a day badly begun, with 'no dew in the morning,' there can be no calm, no peace."

The general disregard of Ascension Day among so-called Church people, was always a matter of real sorrow to Miss Ottley. From the beginning of the school's history, this day was marked by a whole holiday, so that the children might be free to go to church with their parents; and from the year 1893 onwards, it was set apart by her as the special festival of the school, when every communicant, among both "old" and "present" girls and mistresses, should, if possible, make remembrance of the school before God's altar in thanksgiving and prayer.

"I like to think," she wrote in 1897 to a friend who was about to start on her voyage to Canada, "that on Ascension Day, from mid-ocean, as well as from distant lands, thoughts and prayers will touch Worcester." And in 1898, to the same friend, "Ascension Day morning gave one a wonderful thrill of thankfulness; at half-past seven St. George's Church was half filled with High School staff and children, and from every church

in Worcester, and very many elsewhere, one felt the throb of prayer."

The following are notes of one of her Ascension-tide "talks":

"What is Heaven? Where is it? We look up to the clear blue sky, or we gaze into the depths of the myriad stars, and we know that somewhere in the vast immeasurable depths, beyond the limits of space, the very human body of our LORD is,—marked with the marks of the nails and spear; we know that Stephen, St. Paul, and many another has seen Him; but where?

"We cannot tell; for Heaven is not a place as we speak of places. Heaven is the satisfaction of every craving of our nature in the conscious, abiding presence of God. So the Scandinavian dreamed of Walhalla, and the Eastern of voluptuous delight; and the weary crave rest, 'to do nothing for ever and ever.' But we have other longings—perfect love, without its pain; perfect knowledge, ever growing; perfect holiness, with no danger of sinning. A pure conscience which can look up gladly, fearlessly, into the Father's face: this is the life, this is the joy which we call Heaven.

"But after all, 'Eye hath not seen, &c.'; it is unimagined, inconceivable, perfect bliss, prepared by ONE, Who, being Man, knows what man needs, and gives to each exactly what will be purest joy to him.

"But meanwhile, as He Himself is the Centre and Source of all the joy of Heaven, our heavenly life begins here, in every prayer, every Communion that brings us near to Him. His conscious Presence—that is Heaven; and that does begin here. We may now dwell in Him and He in us; we may now 'in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell.'"

V

The *Preparation for Confirmation*, to Miss Ottley a most sacred part of the trust committed to her, must

be a precious memory to all who were prepared at school. The importance of their Confirmation; the responsibility of their position, and the height of their calling as members of the Church; the humble gratitude which they owed to God for thus calling them to closer union with Himself; such were some of the truths which she set before them at this solemn time. Yet "it is not so much what she taught," writes one of her Old Girls, "as the way in which she took the classes, that impressed itself so indelibly upon our minds and hearts. As we went into that little upstairs sitting-room, with its rows of chairs set ready for the class, we felt instinctively, it would seem, the force of her spirituality. The all-compelling reverence of tone and attitude was in itself a constant reminder that we were 'on holy ground,' and some of us will never forget our sense of loss when the classes came to an end. For we had the opportunity of learning then, if never before, the secret of her power, of seeing the ultimate meaning of religion, the simple expression of pure goodness, translated into terms of everyday life."

The following prayers, found on loose sheets among her papers, were used by her at her Confirmation classes :

"Most Holy LORD GOD, Who knowest us far better than we know ourselves, and seest all the sinfulness of our hearts, and of our words and deeds; have mercy upon us who are Thine own children, and look on us only in Thy Son JESUS CHRIST, Who has paid the full penalty of the sins of the whole world; and grant us such a knowledge of our sins that we may be deeply and lovingly penitent, and that Thou mayest receive and pardon us, and give us the help of Thy Holy Spirit to continue in Thy Love even to the end, through the Life and the Death of Thy Son JESUS CHRIST Our LORD. Amen."

"O God Our Father, Who callest us now to confess Thee before Thy Church and the Holy Angels; send, we beseech Thee, upon us, the power of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may be truly and wholly Thine, and giving ourselves to Thee, may seek only to know and to do Thy Will. Help us to love Thee first, Thee best, and all others only in Thee and for Thy Sake. Give us the power to draw very near to Thee in prayer and in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, and to continue Thine for ever, through JESUS CHRIST Our LORD. Amen."

One year it happened that, through an outbreak of illness, some of the candidates were unable to be confirmed with the rest of the school. This was the letter which they received from her :

"THE HIGH SCHOOL,
March 26.

"MY DEAR CHILDREN,—I must send you a line of loving sympathy in this great disappointment; I am sure that you will all feel that it is just a little loving discipline which God is sending you, perhaps as an opportunity for real sacrifice; and if you accept it lovingly for the sake of Him, Who bore so much for you, He will give you the fulness of His blessing.

"I find there will be a Confirmation at Powyke on Sunday, May 31, and I feel sure that Canon Claughton¹ could arrange for you to go there.—Ever your very affectionate
ALICE OTTLEY."

Closely connected with the Confirmation Classes were Miss Ottley's *Communicants' Classes*, held monthly during those early years. Here the pre-Confirmation teaching was carried further and higher, and here, again, the secret of all the power of her personality, her

¹ For many years Canon Claughton prepared the High School candidates for Confirmation.

burning love of God, her intense devotion to our Blessed LORD, the reality of her union with Him, became apparent, all unconsciously to herself, as, in tones of deepest reverence, she taught the great truths of the Faith concerning the Blessed Sacrament. Those who came to her Communicants' Classes knew, as indeed did those who lived in daily contact with her, that here lay the well-spring of her grace and influence.

During the later history of the school, the Communicants' Class was intended primarily for the Old Girls, and as these became more scattered, it was held less frequently. All who were within reach took advantage of it; those at a distance would time their visits to Worcester in order to include it. The Communicants of the school were always allowed to be present also.

The following thoughts on Meditation, found written in pencil, on a scrap of paper, may be given in connexion with Miss Ottley's Communicants' Classes. They are headed :

Ps. cxxx.

Whitsuntide collect.

"In Meditation do not look for much result. (Bp. Gore). Our meditations will always be a failure, but where should we be without them? The being in God's presence for half an hour does make a difference in our life afterwards; we speak differently, feel differently.

"And then there is God's side. . . . God looks in love and pity on our effort. Remember the difference between prayer and prayers—the latter so unimportant, the former so all-important; the just being with God; and though falling very short, yet struggling on."

A letter written by Miss Ottley to an Old Girl, while

staying in Germany, out of reach of Church privileges, will be of interest here :

“ I am very sorry you lost your Communion, but I quite believe that ‘ to obey,’ *i.e.* to accept the crossing of our will, ‘ is better than sacrifice,’ and God can draw near to us without the sacramental means, if it is not by our own fault or neglect that we are deprived of them. If I were you, I should try to join with all those who are worshipping in England, at eight o’clock on Sunday morning, by making an Act of spiritual communion and using the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel. When I was ill and unable to be in Church, I often felt that one realised more than ever the Communion of Saints, by joining thus spiritually in their worship.”

One of the earliest institutions of the school was the *Mission Working Party*, inaugurated after a visit from Dr. Smythies of the U.M.C.A. in December 1883, just before he went out as Bishop of Zanzibar. Miss Ottley had many personal links with the mission field, especially with Africa, where her oldest friend, Mrs. McKenzie, the wife of the Bishop of Zululand, was then working.¹ Her sister, Mrs. Fitzroy Sewell and her husband, were also living in South Africa. It was natural, therefore, that she should choose Africa as her school’s first “ foreign ” field for mission work ; and for many years the “ mission-money ”—pennies and halfpennies given by the children, and collected monthly by the præfects of forms—went towards the maintenance of African children. First Essie Mennu, a little Zulu girl, and afterwards Maud Etheldreda Kimramsele, at Zanzibar, found a place in the prayers and interest of the school.

¹ Mrs. McKenzie’s brother, the Rev. William Porter, had joined the Universities’ Mission in Central Africa in 1880. He died at Lumesule in November 1909, after nearly thirty years’ service.

Shortly after Dr. Smythies' visit, the Bishop of Bedford¹ suggested St. Augustine's Parish, Stepney, as a suitable sphere of home mission work for the school, and from that time onward the Church's twofold claim, at home and abroad, was kept before the children.

The mission working-party was held from four to five o'clock on Tuesdays, and in very early days was quite informal. The children brought their dolls and pets, and there are memories of white rats and tame mice being allowed to run about among the needles and cottons on the table round which they sat. The party included former as well as present girls, and large quantities of clothes were made every year, besides altar-linen and other Church embroidery. Many delightful visits were paid by missionaries on furlough and workers in East London, giving vivid sketches of their work, and thus keeping alive the interest in it.

On autumn days in those early years, by way of a change, blackberrying expeditions were organised, and the working-party hour was spent in peeling and slicing apples, ready for making the blackberry and apple jam, so much appreciated by Mr. Harry Wilson's poor people.

On Wednesdays, all through the spring, summer, and autumn, flowers were taken to the infirmary during the morning recreation time. These were carefully tied up in bunches, with stalks stripped, ready to be put straight into water, and were greatly appreciated by both nurses and patients.

VI

Lastly, mention must be made of that most important part of the life of any school, *the daily lessons*. The

¹ Dr. Walsham How, afterwards Bishop of Wakefield.

time-table was planned with the greatest care and thoughtfulness, both for teachers and taught, that neither should be overtaxed by the day's work. Besides the subjects usually included in the curriculum of a secondary school, the "womanly art of needlework" was taught in the junior forms. Miss Ottley, a beautiful needlewoman herself, considered this a necessary part of a woman's life-equipment, and soon the High School took the foremost place, which it has ever since retained, among the schools competing for prizes given by the "Ladies' Association for the Improvement of plain needlework." While the school was young, she herself taught all the "Divinity," *i.e.* Scripture and Catechism, besides various other subjects; her reading and recitation lessons were keenly enjoyed by all who shared in them. "All her lessons," says an Old Girl, "were characterised by her own freshness and vigour. They had a charm and novelty all their own, and few of us will have passed through our school life without carrying away something of their inspiration."

Abundantly gifted with the "charisma of teaching," to use her own expression, she had the power of holding the attention of children of all ages, from the "babies" in the kindergarten to the senior girls of the sixth.

Nor was it only in her lessons that she gave herself unsparingly to her school. The children knew that at any moment they could go to her and would never be refused admittance.

Every morning, before prayers, a line of girls was to be seen waiting outside her door to go in, one by one, and proffer their requests. Anyone standing by would marvel at her quick insight into their various needs and the rapidity with which each was supplied: be it the answer to a parent's note, a piece of chalk for a class-room, a Bible or Prayer-book for a Divinity lesson,

or a happy word of congratulation on the arrival of a new little brother or sister.

"Our 'Alma Mater,'" writes an Old Girl, "has always been one to whom we could instinctively turn in case of need, for she had a heart big enough to hold us all. That is perhaps our first and last happy recollection of her.

"I remember now so vividly an early experience of my school days. I was quite a little girl, and found myself at school one morning without either belt or pinafore, an impossible state of affairs from a youngster's point of view. In my perplexity I went to Miss Ottley, and she took me up to her little old bedroom on the dark backstairs, and hunted through all her drawers to find the necessary equipment. After trying all her clean aprons against my small person and finding them hopelessly too big, she finally produced a bright purple belt, which I tried to wear contentedly through the morning with a bright green frock.

"Then I soon found out, as doubtless others did too, that if we stood in imminent peril of bad marks for forgetting a Bible or other necessary which she could supply, the best course was to go straight to her, for she was always ready to exercise her prerogative as Headmistress, and help us without any unpleasant suggestion of consequences."

And this personal attention to the little matters of daily life became a truly uplifting force in the school.

"To a student," writes one already quoted, "the most striking feature of the High School was the minute carefulness with which every detail was performed. Nothing was small or unimportant, everything was transformed, *A.M.D.G.* This high level of detailed excellence was rendered possible by the little things which came immediately under the direction of the Head. It seemed an amazing thing to me when I found

that all the chalk used in the class-rooms came from the Head's own room; and it is not without its significance."

Richly endowed as she was with intellectual powers, these were, to her mind, of no consequence as compared with those moral and spiritual qualities on which she laid such stress.

As a former member of her staff has said :

"It was the strength and beauty of her moral character shining through her intellectual gifts that gave them their force. They were always used by her in the interest of higher things, especially in the service of the school. That was, as it were, the expression of her mind; she suffused it with herself. It was not merely that the school appeared to be her creation; it was really a part of herself, and she a part of it. She bore the relation to it that an artist does to his masterpiece, and she had the artist-soul in her that is never satisfied with less than perfection. Her sure and unerring touch made itself felt through the school; there was no detail of its management that did not bear her impression, and when she spoke, she could make everyone respond to her call, so that the school seemed to be not many but one. And she did this, not only by the power of eloquence, with which she was indeed remarkably gifted, but by the whole strength and force of her mind and character, brought to bear on every occasion. It might perhaps have been felt by some that she impressed herself so markedly on the school as not to leave much scope for individuality in her children, but it has been abundantly testified that this was not the case,¹ and certainly there could be no

¹ To quote the words of one of her Old Girls: "Her personality was stamped upon the school as the clear impression is on wax, so that over and over again it has been said by outside people that the mark was unmistakable, yet . . . she never interfered with the development of individual character. Many of us would have been as clay in her hands, but instead of moulding us, she gave us to ourselves."

more admirable training than hers for young and untried teachers who threw themselves loyally into the life and work of the school. She never seemed to try to influence them directly, but trusted to the influence of the school to work upon them.

"She was singularly free from any trace of sentimentality, for she had the clearest vision of anyone I ever met; that was part of her intellectual strength and her innate good taste.

"Her range of knowledge was very remarkable too, and put that of the modern generation with its more specialised education to shame, for one felt that it was real knowledge and no smattering. She had indeed a remarkable grasp of any subject she touched on, and always brought her independent judgment to bear on it. One felt, too, that though her views were clearly defined and firmly held, they were not prejudiced or rigid. I remember her saying once, that we could not expect a younger generation to accept our ideals in the form in which we might hold them; that we must adapt them to changing modes of thought."

Such was the Head and moving spirit of the Worcester High School. Small wonder that she gathered round her a band of high-principled fellow-workers, who caught her enthusiasm, and, "love-loyal to her lightest wish," worked with her towards the fulfilment of their daily prayer—"Show Thy servants Thy work, and their children Thy glory."¹ God's glory, the motive of her own life, became the motive of the school's life, as the inspiration of her personality kindled her staff and touched each one of her children.

¹ Ps. xc. 16, 17, are a part of the daily Morning Prayers.

CHAPTER V

TWENTY-ONE YEARS: 1883-1904

"A joyful mother of children."

"Her children rise up and call her blessed."

As has already been seen, the growth of the Worcester High School, during its first two years of existence, was very rapid, the numbers in June 1885 having reached one hundred and twenty-five. For the next five years they remained at about this figure, while the character of the school was being formed, its tradition fixed, in the ways described in the last chapter.

I

The first inspection of the school by an Oxford examiner was made by the Rev. Robert Ewing¹ in December 1885. His report ended:

"I was greatly pleased with the general arrangements of the school, the discipline, and the arrangement of lessons and subjects. There seems to be much enthusiasm and industry, and the whole tone of the school, so far as it could be judged by a short visit, seems to be excellent. Thoroughness in study, quality rather than quantity, conscientious application, neatness and method in producing results, and a praiseworthy devotion to the backward girls—these appear to be the keynotes of the school; and they hold out the hope that the present high standard will be maintained, or rather soon surpassed, if the school is fortunate enough to retain the same teaching staff."

¹ Sometime Fellow and Senior Tutor of S. John's College, Oxford.

In 1886 and 1887 Mr. Ewing came again, and again each year expressed his pleasure in examining the school. He praised "the devotion and industry of the mistresses and the eagerness of the pupils," and noticed also that all appliances necessary for the comfort and happiness of the girls were provided, that habits of neatness and orderliness in work were effectually taught, and that an excellent moral tone pervaded the entire school.

Meanwhile, in July 1885, Miss Ottley and the school had sustained a serious loss in the appointment of Canon Butler to the Deanery of Lincoln. He had initiated the project for establishing a school for girls in Worcester, and from the day of Miss Ottley's selection as Head-mistress, every thought and plan of hers for the welfare of the school received his careful consideration and practical support. As he found opportunity, he took part in the everyday life and work of the school, lecturing on Bible study to the staff after the weekly mistresses' meeting; talking to the children or giving them a lesson; constantly offering his services in the solution of problems and difficulties; encouraging everyone by the example of his own zeal and enthusiasm. He had the satisfaction of feeling that in Miss Ottley he had found a Head-mistress after his own heart. His letters to her from Wantage, Lincoln and elsewhere, show how large a place both she and the school held in his affections and how he ever bore them in prayerful remembrance.

From Wantage he wrote in June 1884 :

"I cannot say how thankful I am when I think of that school of yours. I am more than I can say anxious about the tone of things in all directions. Church feeling seems lost, or in great degree dying out. The great wave which has carried us on so long and so wonderfully is losing its *vis*. Intellectualism—Art—the love of the

Creature—are forming a new atmosphere, and we shall have a hard struggle to keep some of those who, in better times, would *naturally* have thrown in their lot with Christ and His Church. Young married ladies walk about the College gardens at Oxford on Sundays with French novels in their hands, and do not even know, or profess not to know, the way to church! . . .

“I must not run on. But once more I thank God for sending you to Worcester, and thus giving some chance to the city, of learning the principles of female modesty and dignity and the teaching of the Church.”

And from Lincoln, May 10, 1886 :

“I cannot say how I long to be near you and the work of Worcester. I never fail to think of it and of you every morning and evening. I am convinced that your work tells on the whole of the city and neighbourhood. You will not be able to see the results for some little time. They will come out in a higher spiritual tone in the various families, in intelligent appreciation of the Church, in a drawing together of earnest loving hearts.”

His departure from Worcester was perhaps the first of the many trials and sorrows in connexion with her work that seemed to gather more and more thickly round Miss Ottley as time went on.

“You have my warmest sympathy in your great loss by the removal of Dean Butler to Lincoln,” wrote Mr. Cleaver from Pulham St. Mary, in Norfolk, “but he has helped you with the foundations, and now you can build on them bravely and trustfully, humbly and thankfully, as the Hand of your God has been good upon you.”

A memorable day for her was October 3, 1885, when the Dean came from Lincoln and founded her "Old Girls' Guild," which in time grew to be so important an extension of the school's work. Its purpose was "to unite in a bond of common prayer and interest those who, having been educated at the High School, wish to keep up some connexion with their 'Alma Mater.' " It started with the Head-mistress as head, *ex officio*; two members of the staff as associates, and one Old Girl, the Dean's own grand-daughter, as a member; and had as its basis a simple rule of life with daily prayer, carefully thought out and drawn up by Miss Ottley with the Dean's help.

"It is impossible to exaggerate the value of the Guild," wrote Miss Ottley in 1891; "its members constitute a band of capable and ready helpers in any emergency at all times; they promote the best interests of the school, and maintain the good old traditions, whilst they further the new developments of the work."

Writing after Miss Ottley's death to the members and associates of the Guild, Canon Claughton said:

"During the twenty years and more since I became Warden, I have shared with all others who were brought into contact with her in relation to spiritual things, an ever-deepening sense of indebtedness which cannot be expressed in words. It has grown with our growth, and strengthened with our strength.

"Her intense solicitude for the religious welfare of all entrusted to her care, not only in the primary stages of their school career, but especially at the time of their Confirmation and first Communion, and after they had left the school, was a source of untold strength to those who came under its influence.

"No one who was associated with her in her great

work, as were all connected with the Guild, could fail to feel it, and to thank God for it.

"Definite teaching, the outcome of her own firm conviction and unfaltering faith, watered by her self-sacrificing love for souls, enforced by the example of her own consistent life, bore fruit abundantly in hundreds of other lives, and not least—may I not say in a marked degree?—in those who joined the Guild."

From the first Miss Ottley kept steadily in view her ideal of what a school should be—not only in the spirit and tone pervading it, but in its outward form and surroundings, its buildings and equipment. Very quietly she planned, and very patiently she waited for the fulfilment of her hopes and visions. Her faith and enthusiasm inspired her with courage; no difficulty ever daunted her; the seeming "impossibility" of some scheme for the improvement of the school did but make it the more attractive. Indeed, she was no mere visionary; her idealism was combined with a shrewd common sense which made her quick to measure possibilities, and to discard what was really impracticable. She was fond of quoting Dean Butler's saying, "Prayer, faith, and grind will carry most things through."

The first extension of the school buildings has already been recorded. In 1885 was formed the nucleus of an excellent reference library¹ for the use of mistresses and senior girls; this was followed the next year by the foundation of the children's library, and in 1887 an organ was set up in the large hall, as the school's Jubilee Memorial to Queen Victoria. The museum, too, was founded in those early days, and thus the necessary "plant" of the school gradually advanced towards completion.

¹ The "Butler Library," the city's memorial to Canon Butler, on his promotion to the Deanery of Lincoln.

In 1885, the first annual speech-day was held. This became the great social event of the school-year. The success of these and of other school ceremonies was a striking witness to Miss Ottley's capacity for organisation. Every detail of the day's proceeding was planned by her. She was present at the final rehearsals of the programme, and would approve no performance of recitation or music that was not first-rate. She even practised the children in the curtsseys with which she wished them to receive their prizes.

Her own speech was the chief attraction of the afternoon. Dressed, as her custom was, in blue velvet, which seemed to give added lustre to the blueness of her eyes, she moved to her place on the platform with quiet dignity. Her voice, clear and perfectly modulated, was heard from end to end of the crowded hall, and she spoke with a simple eloquence that was no mere empty flow of words. Whether in private discussion or on public occasions, she quite unconsciously lifted the minds of those who heard her to a higher level. She led them to see things in a clear light and in true proportion ; and she had a true teacher's instinct for what would tell and would carry conviction.

Her view was that prizes should be awarded for intelligent industry rather than for mere intellectual ability, and although, as time went on, certain prizes were reserved for proficiency in various subjects, those which were the reward of careful, persevering diligence in every department of work, satisfied her best.

Prizes were always given for the best summer holiday task in each form. As a rule the task imposed took the form of some out-of-door exercise. The museum has frequently been enriched by well-arranged collections of flowers, shells, and fossils—the result of a summer holiday's work.

II

The High School was, of course, originally started as a day-school, but from quite early times there were parents at a distance who sent their daughters to be educated by Miss Ottley, and, for these, homes were found in Worcester near the school. Dr. and Mrs. Crowe were among the first to take in two or three boarders (Dean Butler's grand-daughters among them), and in 1888, when the number of children coming from outside Worcester, necessitated the establishment of a larger boarding-house in connexion with the school, Mrs. Jerram and her daughters took "Baskerville," a roomy house in a quiet spot behind the Tything, for this purpose. Two years later a second boarding-house was opened at "Springfield," in Britannia Square, by Mrs. Vincent, who had for many years been governess in Lord Beauchamp's family.

Miss Ottley, as was natural, felt deeply her responsibility in regard to the boarders, and used to make special opportunities for having them with her and getting to know them. Almost every Sunday morning, one or two were invited to breakfast with her after the early service, and when breakfast was over she would read to them Keble's poems for the day, from *The Christian Year* and *The Lyra Innocentium*.

Sometimes on a wet Saturday afternoon, the boarders would gather, after tea, in the large hall for an impromptu dance, when Miss Ottley would join them, dancing with them and sharing in their pleasure.

In 1890, when the school was well established, having rendered seven years' service to the "Faithful City," its magazine, *White and Blue*, brought out once a term, and edited by Miss Ottley herself, made its first appearance, chiefly as a bond of mutual interest between

past and present girls and mistresses. As the years went on, the magazine became a recognised medium of communication between Miss Ottley and her "Old Girls," though it never took the place of that intimate correspondence with individuals which she delighted to keep up.

By this time, after much thought, she had changed the school motto, "The white flower of a blameless life," to "*Candida Rectaque*,"¹ and it was with these words as its text that in 1898 the Latin hymn² (the "*Dulce Domum*" of the Worcester High School) was composed by the Rev. William Wallace, D.D., the guardian of one of the children.

Madonna lilies, *candida rectaque*, were a fitting emblem of Miss Ottley's ideal for the children of the Worcester High School, and many were the illustrations which she drew from their purity and grace in her Tuesday "talks," and at other times. To her the lilies spoke

"Of more radiant hues that shall invest
The earth-soil'd soul, which, while it hastes to die,
Is cloth'd afresh with immortality";³

and she loved to weave them into the very fabric of the school's life. There were lilies in the garden, coaxed into flower by June 20, for the commemoration of the school's birthday; lilies, when possible, on the prayer-desk in the large hall; lilies for decoration at all school functions; her children themselves were "lilies in the Garden of the King." And mixed with the lilies, in the garden and elsewhere, were flowers of

¹ Pure and upright.

² This, with its translation and the tune written for it later by the Rev. H. H. Woodward, then precentor of Worcester Cathedral, will be found in the appendix to this chapter, p. 131.

³ From *The Baptistery*.

royal blue—lobelia, cornflowers, veronica, &c.—and the girls used to vie with each other in bringing her posies of white and blue on special occasions.¹

By the end of the first seven years, games had begun to have their ordered place in the school life. Lawn tennis for the elder girls was the first to be introduced, and it was in 1890 that the Oxford High School first sent its champions to Worcester for the match, which from that date onward became a yearly event. In 1893, Miss Soulsby, Head-mistress of the Oxford High School, presented a "challenge shield" bearing the device of a lily and a sunflower (the school badge), to be retained during the ensuing year by the winning school.

For the younger girls a cricket club was formed, and their first match (with the Edgbaston High School) was also played in 1890. Miss Ottley's views on cricket as a game for girls were expressed in the "Editorial" of an early number of *White and Blue* as follows :

"We find that some misapprehension has been caused by the report, in our last number, of the Cricket Club ; from its limitations not having been stated.

"Girls are only eligible for it under fourteen years of age ; it is emphatically *children's cricket* ; and the Head-mistress is anxious that it should be clearly understood that she utterly detests women's cricket.

"She considers it to be a game admirable for *little* girls and for all boys ; exercising some of the best moral qualities as well as physical powers : but it is one of the things she would have girls lay aside when they leave childhood behind and enter upon maidenhood. She earnestly desires that the 'note' of the Worcester High School should be a delicate, womanly refinement, a high-toned courtesy, a gentle manner, a dignified bearing,

¹ The latest development is a white and blue garden along one side of the hockey field, planted since Miss Ottley's death.

which shall be as far removed from the loud, romping vulgarity of the hoyden, called 'the girl of the period,' as from the mincing affectation of the 'fine lady' of the eighteenth century.

"There may be differences of connotation in the term 'a lady'; there can be none of that nobler word, which expresses what every girl may and should become—'a gentlewoman.'"

It was not until some years later that hockey was introduced at the High School, and Miss Ottley's last gift to the school was a set of lacrosse.

During these seven years, four members of the school council and three of the staff were removed by death;—besides four of the children, "for whom," wrote Miss Ottley in the first number of *White and Blue*, "we thank God, Who has taken them early into His blessed rest, and feel that Paradise is more real to us all for some of our children being there."

Other friends had left Worcester. The departure of Canon and Mrs. Butler in 1885, was followed by that of Lord and Lady Alwyne Compton in 1886,¹ and the removal of these earliest and most staunch supporters caused a real blank in the life of Miss Ottley and her school. She also keenly felt the loss from the staff of Miss Mary Douglas, who had been with her since the opening day, and was appointed Head-mistress of the Godolphin School, Salisbury, in 1889.

Lord Alwyne was succeeded at the Deanery by Dr. Gott, Vicar of Leeds, who proved a firm friend and constant helper. He it was who inaugurated the Cathedral children's services, held on Sunday afternoons, at which the High School girls, together with the boys of the Cathedral choir and King's Schools, formed the

¹ Lord Alwyne Compton became Bishop of Ely, where he remained till his death in 1905.

bulk of the congregation. Dr. Gott also undertook the preparation of the school candidates for Confirmation as long as he remained in Worcester. How genuine was his care for Miss Ottley and his interest in her work is shown by the following extracts from his letters to her when prevented by illness from being present at a speech-day :

" I need not tell you, need I ? how vexed I am at missing your prize-giving this afternoon. It is an occasion which always seems part of me, cheering my better part ; and I take new heart as I look on all those bright, earnest young faces."

At the beginning of a new year's work :

" I do not like the thought of your returning to your great work and beginning a new year of its eternal results without a word of God-speed to you from your Cathedral. May the Master daily bless your work to you and you to it, that it may be a year of grace to you all. I am leaving this morning for work in Leeds, Yarmouth, and London, so I shall miss my dear children for the next two Sundays. God bless them."

A Canadian friend, who first made Miss Ottley's acquaintance in 1890, writes :

" The High School already expressed her personality in a wonderful way. It was the body of which she was the informing soul, and her influence radiated through the mistresses, whose loyalty and responsiveness she ever gratefully recognised, to the youngest pupil in the kindergarten. She came in touch so quickly with those she met ; her absolute simplicity and sincerity soon found its way to whatever was real in them, and her delicate sympathy and comprehension drew out all that was best, in answer to her own high ideals.

" I think that those first seven years in Worcester had



FRONT OF THE WORCESTER HIGH SCHOOL

been very happy ones, and that in her successful and growing work there, she had realised herself, and found a fitting exercise for her powers as never before. For her gifts were great, and were so completely at the disposal of the Lord to Whom she had committed herself and them, that He was able to use them to the fullest measure. Surely that was the secret of her influence; it was very human, and yet it was inspired and fortified by the Divine, and therefore it was no coercion, no force of a dominating personality which subjected all to itself. but, as is the Divine method, a quickening of the inner germ of life, which in due time should bring forth fruit according to its kind."

After the school's seventh birthday its numbers rose steadily to over two hundred, and the next fourteen years saw the gradual completion and perfection of its buildings. The front block, which, carried out in the same style as the original portion of the school, has given the present Britannia House so imposing an appearance, was opened in 1893, and Miss Ottley's letters, written at this time, show how greatly she rejoiced in the airy spaciousness of the new central hall and classrooms. In 1897, the large hall was extended by the addition of an apsidal east end, which formed a kind of theatre large enough to seat the whole school, thus leaving the whole of the floor for the parents and friends, who now in large numbers attended the speech-days and entertainments. This was the school's Diamond Jubilee Memorial to Queen Victoria. About the same time a large playing field behind the school was acquired by the Council.

A bad breakdown in health, which she had tried to ward off for some time, kept Miss Ottley away from the school during the summer term of 1892, and this year Rogation-tide had fresh meaning for the children, as on each day they offered prayers for her recovery. By

her these months were accepted as an opportunity for spiritual growth ; " nothing is so fruitful in blessing as the crossing of our own will, one learns that hourly," she wrote to a friend from her exile. As soon as she was fit to travel so far, she was taken to Switzerland, and here, thanks to the invigorating air of the mountains, which always seemed to give her fresh life, she quickly regained her strength. In a letter written on August 10 from Argentières, in the Chamounix valley, she said :

" Your letter has been long unanswered, though often read, for whilst I was ill I was forbidden to write more than was absolutely necessary ; but now I will no longer delay writing, for I am well, and am so enjoying the delicious sense of health, which I have really not known for at least two years, that everything is a pleasure. You know that M—— is with me, and we are having the most delightful time amongst the solemn glories of the mountains. Until to-day we have had quite perfect weather—Mont Blanc, just opposite the windows of the hotel, has shown itself in every aspect of beauty, from lovely sunrise to glorious sunset ; now it is hidden by pouring rain, and we are prisoners here, instead of walking over the Pass into the Rhone valley as we intended. . . .

" I wish I could truly say that my time of illness had been, consciously at least, a time of fruitfulness ; it was a real disappointment that when quiet and leisure, for which I had so often longed, came to me, I was as incapable spiritually, as I was physically and mentally, of the slightest effort ; it was just bearing, from day to day, what each day brought, and trying to accept it—nothing more. But there is a freshness of joy in coming back to the light, which is like the glow of the sunrise of a new day after a dark night. . . . We are the most supremely happy party of seven that can be imagined."

III

The beginning of the September term saw her back at the High School, to the great joy of all her Worcester friends, and school reopened with a thanksgiving service for her recovery. In the November number of *White and Blue* she wrote as follows to her staff and children :

“ MY DEAR COLLEAGUES AND CHILDREN, OLD AND PRESENT,—The last number of *White and Blue* reached me during my banishment from Worcester, and now that, through God’s mercy, I am back again, I must use the new number to thank you, each and all, for the prayers which I heartily believe to have been, in the truest sense, the means of my recovery ; indeed we, as a school, have been taught, by very real experience, that prayer is the efficient means for obtaining all those ‘ good and perfect gifts ’ which, although they reach us through the skill or the kindness of others, yet truly ‘ come down from the Father of Lights.’ Let us not forget to thank Him, ‘ not only with our lips but in our lives.’

“ I must also congratulate you all on the splendid work done in my absence. I knew you, and therefore expected you to do your best ; but that ‘ best ’ has proved so good that I am tempted to think that the way to have an unprecedented record of success, in every examination for which any of you enter, is for me to be ill, and to go away !

“ To *thank* any of you for this, would be to suggest a motive wholly inadequate to inspire such work ; it is only, I believe, the result of steady perseverance in the children, directed by the self-sacrificing devotion of the mistresses, that has produced its natural result.

“ Now we have all to take care never to fall short of this year’s standard of excellence, but to

‘ Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell ;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before.’

"How naturally, almost inevitably, our aspirations formulate themselves in the words of the great Laureate whose death we are all feeling as a personal loss !

"We, as a High School, very early learnt to love him ; from him we borrowed our first school motto ; his 'Arthur,' as representing Conscience indwelt and enlightened by the Spirit of God, we adopted as our ideal hero ; and so, while we rejoice that England's best thought, in this nineteenth century, found in him so noble an exponent, we feel, further, that we have definitely committed ourselves to his standard of purpose in life, as the only one worth aiming at, whether in the little world of school, or in the larger world outside :

'Our wills are ours, we know not how,
Our wills are ours, to make them Thine.'

So long as our corporate and individual life is attuned to that keynote, we need not be anxious about the future of the much-loved school, of which it is my joy to be the Head-mistress.

ALICE OTTLEY."

At the end of November there was an outbreak of diphtheria among the children living with Dr. and Mrs. Crowe. A little son of their own, and two of their boarders, were stricken, and after a terribly anxious period of some days, while all three hovered between life and death, the two little girls passed away on December 4, while, on the same day, the boy took a turn for the better, and in time was nursed back to life and health.

The younger of the two who died was a little kindergarten child of nine years old ; the elder, aged thirteen years and eleven months, was a clever, high-spirited girl, born to be a leader, and thoughtful beyond her years. Always a delicate child, she had not long recovered from an illness caused by an abscess on her foot, which had kept her absent from school, and for some time

confined to a sofa,—a severe trial to one of her energetic and highly-strung temperament. While lying there, she insisted on having Miss Ottley's photograph hung where she could keep it in sight. "It helps me to keep my temper," she said. She had congratulated herself on her own absence from school having partly coincided with Miss Ottley's, and had come back full of hope and joy and good resolutions, and apparently much stronger than she had ever been before.

Speech-day this year was on November 21, and as Form IIIA recited Tennyson's "Relief of Lucknow," her voice seemed to ring out above the others through the hall, and there were many who noticed the eager little face, and the intentness with which she, unconsciously, led that recitation.

In the next number of *White and Blue*, Miss Ottley wrote :

IN MEMORIAM

"My Beloved is gone down into His garden . . . to gather lilies."

"Those who were here on speech-day can hardly fail to remember Tennyson's 'Relief of Lucknow,' and many will recollect the bright earnest face of Ruth — as she led that recitation ; how little any of us thought that we were looking at it for the last time ; that within a fortnight that eager little voice would be hushed ;— the place where she had stood at prayers, leading singing and response, would be empty ; that our dear child would be

'. . . gone unto that School,
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ Himself doth rule.'

In spite of all that medical skill, trained nursing and tender motherly care could do, she has passed from our midst ; and many hearts ache sorely, and feel that life

here can never be quite the same to them ; and it is true ;—it cannot be the same, but surely it should be better !

“ Our Father ‘ doeth all things well ’ ; we know ‘ it is well with the child ’ ; those words which rang through the hall from her lips, ‘ Saved ! We are saved ! saved . . . by the blessing of Heaven ! ’ are true, in a far higher and deeper sense ; the brave little soldier-spirit which had fought on—through failure sometimes, through difficulty always—is safe now ; the Captain of our Salvation has crowned the little victor in the fight His Eye alone had watched ; for we only knew that it was often hard for her, but that she always *tried*, always was loyal and true ; never excused herself ; nay, often blamed herself for little faults, far more than anyone else blamed her.

“ We will not irreverently lift the veil which hid the inner life of a nature strong and reserved beyond her childish years, except so far as to say that we know now where she sought and found strength for the battle ; *there* where, if we seek it, as she did, we may also win the power to be ‘ faithful unto death,’ that so He may give to each one of us ‘ the Crown of Life.’

“ Only a few hours before our dear Ruth passed peacefully into the life beyond, a dear little girl from the kindergarten was taken also. Of Winifred — we think simply as of a little lamb lovingly folded, before her feet had had time to stray ; a fair lily-bud, gathered in her sweet purity, fresh from the font ; never to know sorrow or suffering, struggle or sin ! Can we wish it otherwise for her ? Shall we not rather thank Him Who has so loved these little ones as to take them early into His Paradise ? We will think of them, speak of them, love them, and realise that in the moments when we are nearest to Him in Whom they live, they are not far away ; for we ‘ believe in the Communion of Saints.’ ”

In 1896, when again the shadow of a great sorrow fell upon the school, and a young life full of brilliant promise

was " added to our store in Paradise," Miss Ottley wrote in *White and Blue* :

" Now, as every Wednesday morning at prayers we think of her, let us try more and more to realise that she lives in Him, and that in our own holiest, most peaceful moments, above all in Holy Communion, when we draw nearest to Him, we are also nearest to her. It does lift the whole school into a purer, higher atmosphere, to know that so many, whose warfare is over, are thinking of us, loving us, praying for us in the calm of Paradise, where they see ' with larger, other eyes than ours.' It should brace us to ever greater earnestness, and brighter hopefulness, and more patient continuance in well-doing, as we ' run the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.' "

Besides losses such as these, Miss Ottley had many private sorrows during this period. Three of her sisters passed to their rest, and her mother, and many of the friends on whom she had learnt to rely so much.

The death of her sister, Mrs. Porter, followed closely upon that of the Dean of Lincoln and of Mrs. Butler, who died within a week of each other, in January 1894.

In the following number of *White and Blue* she wrote :

" One thought must be uppermost in all our hearts this term, for, with its beginning, we have turned over a new page in the school's history ; we have lost one who, in a very true sense, was our founder, and we are left to strive to realise his ideal, without the help of his ever ready sympathy, and his strong judgment, to cheer and to guide us.

" This is not the place for a memoir of our dear Dean, (let us hope *that* will, some day, be on the shelves of the

library which bears his name), but we may try to note some salient points in, to gather some of the lessons from, the two beautiful lives which we cannot, and need not, think of apart—each the perfect complement of the other, and together fulfilling the highest ideal of Christian life ; *his* great strength tempered by infinite tenderness ; *her* supreme gentleness the garb which partly concealed and partly expressed her deep wisdom ; the pervading spirit of both was the same,—absolute singleheartedness, simplicity of aim, to do God's will, ' to be good ' as he so often expressed it.

" Both were gifted with quite exceptional intellectual powers, which had been so highly cultivated that nothing which either of them said or wrote was ever commonplace or superficial. Mrs. Butler's letters and conversation sparkled with a keen insight, and a racy originality, in which there was not a word that was sarcastic or bitter, nothing but what was ' pure womanly ' in its kindliness ; while the Dean's were rich with large and varied culture, generous sympathy with all that was truly good and beautiful, and a noble scorn of what was base or selfish. But there was one note which pre-eminently sounded through all the life and words of both, and that was their absolute, direct *trueness*.

" We look, perhaps almost with despair, at the splendid standard such lives have set up, feeling how incapable we are of reaching it ; but yet, as a school, and each for ourselves, we may, we must, be true to their principles ; to an unflinching and uncompromising maintenance of the truth, refusing to accept the world's standard of right and wrong ; working patiently, not for superficial success, but for thoroughness ; striving, not to appear, but to be good."

" So only may we dare to hope, some day, in the bright Paradise where they rest from their labours, to meet them again without shame ; and to bear to our founder, tidings of the school he loved.

" And by one means only is this possible ; by following in their steps, in the life of prayer and of self-discipline which was the secret of their power."

And writing on February 26 to a friend, she said :

" Our time in Rome was very interesting,¹ but the storm of sorrow which has swept across my life since, seems to have put it back years. Yet it is sorrow without bitterness, for all has been so beautiful, so absolutely consistent, in the lives that have passed out of sight, that I feel rather that we have been watching at the gate of Paradise, as one and another passed in. It is only when one looks away from them, in their calm rest, that life here looks dim and sad ; but the way cannot be very long, if only we may be as ready as they to arise quickly when the Master comes and calls for us."

On April 23, to the same friend, she wrote :

" Life grows infinitely solemn as the evening shadows begin to fall across it."

IV

Miss Ottley's power of work and endurance were quite amazing. Her time, filled to the full, as it seemed, in the early Worcester days, became ever more heavily taxed, as she was asked, in later years, to undertake important work of different kinds outside the school.

She did much in the early days to further the cause of the Girls' Friendly Society in Worcester, and for some years held a large weekly Bible Class for young women.

In 1884, she was elected a member of the Head-mistresses' Association, and in 1890 was chosen to sit on its executive committee. After entertaining the Head-mistresses' Conference at Worcester in 1896, she became a vice-president of the Association.²

¹ A short visit which she paid to Rome during the Christmas holidays, 1893-4, was saddened by the news of the Dean's and Mrs. Butler's illness.

² See p. 134.

In 1897 she succeeded Miss Clarke, whose health was failing, as Superior of the Society of the Holy Name, and it was not long before a branch of the Society was established in Worcester.

In the educational world she was known as a strong champion of religious education ; she was appointed a member of the Archbishops' Central Church Councils of secondary Education in 1899, and in 1902 a paper by her, advocating the provision by the Church of a certificate in theology for those who looked forward to teaching that subject in secondary schools, was read at a joint session of these Councils.¹ Twice she was called to speak at the Worcester Diocesan Conference, at Warwick in 1900, and at Worcester in 1905. On the former occasion her subject was, " The Teaching of Creeds in Schools, and of Catechising in Church." ² As she was not able to be present, the paper was read for her, and when the Conference was over she received a letter from the Bishop,³ expressing thanks, " on behalf of myself and of the whole Conference, for your exceedingly interesting and valuable paper. It was accorded a most hearty reception, and I was empowered by the Conference to tender to you our warm appreciation of its merits, and of your kindness in consenting to write it."

In 1903, after the creation of local education authorities under the Act of the preceding year, she consented to sit, not only upon the City Education Committee, but also as representative of the Head-mistresses' Association on the County Committee, and the lengthy meetings

¹ See Chapter VI, p. 136.

² See Chapter VI, p. 147. In 1905 she spoke on the following resolution placed before the Conference : " That the attention of the Conference be called to the means being taken in the Worcester Deaneries to secure the religious education of the children of the Church not attending elementary schools."

³ The Right Rev. J. J. S. Perowne.

of these different bodies, from which she would never willingly absent herself, were a considerable tax upon her strength.

Her power of concentration, her rapid insight into the true bearing of things, her incisiveness of language (she never wasted words on any subject), enabled her to get through a most astonishing amount of work with apparent ease, and through years of mental discipline she had acquired the art of entirely laying aside any piece of completed work, so that she could pass calmly on to the next thing without the waste of nervous energy expended by so many people in afterthought. It was amazing to go to her room just after a tiring and exciting speech-day and find her quietly sitting down to correct books for the next day's lessons. The patience with which she would turn from one subject, however pressing, and give her best attention to another, however trivial, was a constant lesson to others.

It was not surprising that her influence extended far beyond the radius of the school and school circle. The story goes that at a dinner-party in one of the canons' houses some twenty years ago, the question was asked, "Who is the most influential person in Worcester?" and the answer, unhesitatingly given by each and all of the mixed assembly, was "Miss Ottley."

Writing after her death, Mr. Simes, chairman of the Worcester Education Committee, says :

"The Head-master of one of our Public Schools said to me once : 'The longer I live, the more clearly I perceive that above all else it is character that counts.' As one considers the influence which Miss Ottley exerted in the city of Worcester from the point of view of the citizen, one has a remarkable example of the truth of that assertion. The influence of individual upon individual is a matter of everyday observation. The

silent sway of one person over a community is a rarer occurrence. Outside the circle of her own staff and girls, Miss Ottley's power was probably suspected by few, and it is certain that she herself was unconscious of the wide, as well as the deep influence she exerted. But it was at work all the time, even upon those quite unaware of the fact.

"Miss Ottley was diligent in her attendance at those committees upon which she consented to serve, but she was careful not to dissipate her energies by undertaking duties which she felt others could perform equally as well as herself. She spoke seldom and with delightful brevity, but the quiet emphasis of her manner, combined with a knowledge of her subject that was always assured, gave both incisiveness and weight to her utterances. She had a high ideal of the profession to which she belonged, and she was ever ready to support measures which had for their object the betterment of the position of teachers. She was equally concerned for the scholars, and would allow no private considerations to interfere with any attempt to secure increased educational efficiency.

"Miss Ottley took an active and unselfish part in securing the dissolution of the old Mixed secondary school for girls and boys and the establishment of the city of Worcester secondary school for girls. She frankly recognised that the new school might adversely affect the numbers attending her own beloved High School, but this did not interfere with her strenuous endeavours to make it as good as it could be; and the knowledge gained by years of experience was freely placed at the service of the committee and Head-mistress of the new school. Her supreme anxiety was that the girlhood of the city should have the best. It was this loftiness of aim, this devout passion for the highest interests of all, that gave her the unique position she occupied amongst us.

"I have said nothing about her business capacity, her intellectual gifts, or her graces of mind and manner. All these she had, but they are overshadowed in one's

thoughts by her consecrated personality and saintly character.

"When it became my duty, as Chairman of the Worcester Education Committee, to move a resolution upon the occasion of the death of Miss Ottley, I concluded a brief appreciation of her work and worth with the words: 'Above all, she was good.' As one dwells upon her memory, that is the halo which dims all lesser lights."

And Colonel Albert Webb, one of Worcester's leading citizens, supplements Mr. Simes in speaking of her valuable work on the City Education Committee:

"Her quite unanimous selection to a place on the Worcester Education Committee, bears testimony to the value put upon her services by those best qualified to judge, and right well did she justify the appointment. She was always punctual in attendance at meetings so long as her health would permit, and was one of those few, but invaluable, members who speak little but do much. When she did speak, it was always to the point, and upon matters where her technical knowledge carried conviction. Her vote was ever given for the wise and practical project, and on the side of advancement combined with sound common sense. She knew how to distinguish between what was possible and likely to be effective, and what was showy but impracticable.

"She was deeply interested in the question of the conversion of the mixed school at the Victoria Institute into a good secondary school for girls only, and used her great influence quietly but continuously to bring about this most desirable object. The result has more than justified her efforts; an insufficient and badly controlled series of mixed classes has been transformed into one of the best and most successful girls' schools in the county,¹ whilst the boys are far better taught at the Grammar School to which they were drafted. The city has reason to hold Miss Ottley's name in esteem

¹ The Council's school in the Worcester Victoria Institute.

for the part she took in this scheme if there were no other reason for appreciating her services.

"She rendered most valuable service to the Committee on another occasion, by bringing to notice the complaints made by parents to her, which they would probably never have made to the Committee directly, but would have contented themselves by withdrawing their children from certain classes at the Victoria Institute, as many had already done. Her high sense of what was right led her to undertake an extremely unpleasant duty, and the confidence of parents in her wisdom and high-mindedness, helped them to open their minds to her. The difficulty was entirely removed, and the classes again flourished, thanks to her courage and assistance. It is unnecessary to suggest how valuable was her help when the selection of teachers was a question.

"Apart from the Education Committee, she was always ready and anxious to countenance and support, as far as possible, any project for the good of the city, but her quiet, unassuming manner kept her in the background, though her influence shone through and ennobled others. The city is greatly the poorer for her loss."

Of her relations with her Council, Lord Cobham, who succeeded the late Lord Beauchamp as chairman, writes :

"It is difficult to say much about administrative machinery, which has always worked with perfect smoothness and with hardly an outstanding incident to record. It is true that the financial position of the Council has not always been free from anxiety, but Miss Ottley's serenity was never troubled thereby, nor her strong faith in the future of the school shaken. She left the larger questions of financial policy to the Council, and when I thought it right, as Chairman, to touch upon these before the large gatherings of friends of the school on prize days, I always had a misgiving that Miss Ottley regarded my so doing as lowering the keynote of the occasion, though she might pardon it as a regrettable necessity.

"But as regards the current business of the school, Miss Ottley took her full share of responsibility, and her proposals were always so businesslike and judicious, and were presented with such ability and charm of manner, that I cannot ever remember the occasion when any substantial difference of opinion arose between us, or any steps taken, recommended by her, which the Council have had reason to regret.

"Miss Ottley's administration of the school speaks for itself. The school has held its own, notwithstanding occasional financial stringency, and in the face of increasing competition aided by the public rates. Much of this success is of course due to the high religious and intellectual standard aimed at and maintained by Miss Ottley, which enlisted the sympathy and support of parents in all parts of the kingdom, and attracted to her staff, assistants of a high class, who were ready to serve under her for a remuneration less, I fear, in many cases, than the value of their services. But a school in these days cannot live upon character alone. It requires constant attention to detail, judicious business management, and a strict regard to economy. Miss Ottley's beloved memory is so associated with her higher and more conspicuous qualities, that I am glad of the opportunity of pointing out how eminently practical and businesslike she was, and how complete and ideal were her qualifications for the post which she so long and so worthily occupied."

To the parents of her girls she was always a very real friend, inviting, and gratefully acknowledging, their co-operation in all matters connected with their children's school life.

One, the mother of six High School girls, writes :

"It is now nearly fifteen years since I first made Miss Ottley's personal acquaintance, and I have every cause to be truly grateful that she lived long enough for all my six daughters to come under her care at the High School. It is very difficult to express the profound

esteem, the love and veneration which she inspired. 'Would Miss Ottley approve?' was the first question and keynote of our home, when talking of lessons and life-work; and my daily prayer is that my girls may never forget the principles, nor the example of her daily life, 'through Christ Our Lord.' What she did, has enabled me to see my girls go out into the world with confidence, and in the sure hope of a happy re-union. Do you wonder I am very, very grateful?"

And another says :

"I always feel now that dear Miss Ottley's love and high influence has done everything for our girl, and will be, and is, the greatest help and safeguard to her in the ups and downs of life. And thinking of the many hundreds of girls who have come under her care, one feels sure that her high principles and straightforward ways must be handed down again and again, and that the Worcester High School will always maintain its high character."

Another bears witness to her insight into the different characters of her daughters, and to her wise and sympathetic handling of their varying dispositions and temperaments, and adds :

"She always upheld the fulfilment of home duties as the claim of paramount importance in their lives, and her training was invaluable in helping them to form 'right judgments' in matters of every kind. I can never be thankful enough that my girls were so long under her influence."

V

Miss Ottley has been described in these pages as a good listener; she was also a clever and delightful talker and letter-writer, and "excellent company" in whatever society she happened to be. Introduced by

Lady Alwyne Compton and Canon Butler, she took a leading part, especially during her early years in Worcester, in the social life of the city and county. She enjoyed dinner-parties, conversaziones, and other such gatherings at the Deanery, the canons' houses, Madresfield Court,¹ and elsewhere. She was also a most gracious and charming hostess, and her own parties, large or small, were characterised by an air of perfect ease and enjoyment, largely the result of her own infectious enjoyment of them. For, to her, the society of her friends and of "great people" in every sphere of life was a source of real recreation. It was often a surprise to those about her, to find her, in her later years, bright and strong and refreshed, after a dinner-party in a distant part of Worcester, at the end of a tiring day of teaching, interviewing, preparing of lessons, and what not. The society of interesting people whom she met on her holidays at home and abroad, added very largely to her pleasure.

To people near at hand her letters were short, mostly written on half sheets, often consisting of answers to business and other questions, or of advice about matters on which her counsel had been sought; but to her friends abroad she wrote, from time to time, long delightful letters, commenting on every kind of subject.

Her letters to her friend in Canada testify to her wide range of interest in life; in the Church, in politics, in art and history, books and poetry, people and places.

To quote from a few of these letters at random.

From Oxford, in May 1899, she writes :

"In truth, Oxford in the middle of this term is thrillingly interesting; life so full, intellectually and

¹ The Worcestershire seat of Lord Beauchamp.

spiritually, as well as physically, for the ' eights ' ended yesterday, and the outer world is in its fullest burst of spring beauty, and everyone is eager for something special."

After the death of Mr. Gladstone :

" The universal and generous tribute to Mr. Gladstone has been very delightful ; I know you will have read and liked Lord Salisbury's noble speech, and Mr. Balfour's, pathetic as uttered in his own suffering and weakness ; it has been so good to feel that the nation (almost the world) has been lifted above the strife of politics, beyond even the clash of war, and in the hush of a higher and clearer atmosphere has been able to bear testimony to the greatness of a character which was dependent upon religion for all its strength. It is curious that, at this moment, the disgrace of Khartoum should just have been to some extent removed, and a movement be on foot to form a mission there as a memorial to General Gordon ; for that has always been, to my mind, the greatest blot on the page of Gladstone's career."

In the course of the same letter she says :

" I wonder whether you have seen Bishop Westcott's *Christian Aspects of Life* ? I am reading parts of it aloud to my staff ; it is very inspiring and invigorating in its view of all questions social, political, educational, from the standpoint of faith, that faith which is consummated in the teaching of this] day [Whitsun Day], and in the unfathomable and yet glorious mystery of the Triune, brought to us, or rather we raised to it ; ' that they may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee—that they may be one in Us.' "

And in another, written in 1897 :

" They (the Swiss mountains) make me feel that we can afford to wait to learn the secret things of God, and

watch the slow unravelling of His eternal purposes for us and for His Church. I think the special note of His teaching to us just now is the just use of all our faculties for the investigation of truth ;—but still, Intellect kneeling at the foot of the Cross—like Fra Angelico's picture of St. Dominic."

In 1892 :

" All you say of the schisms is quite true ; but I rather grow to feel the deeper unity that underlies them ; and the Prayer of the High Priest ' that they all may be one ' is actually in process of fulfilment. ' God fulfils Himself in many ways. ' I have been reading lately books by Presbyterians, which touch the deepest chords, and yet never jar. Do you know Milligan's books on the Resurrection and the Ascension ? And George Adam Smith on Isaiah in the *Expositor's Bible* ? They must be the outcome of deep devotional and illuminated study, and open up rich veins of thought.

" For us who are teachers, Mr. Skrine's *A Memory of Edward Thring* has a peculiar interest. . . . But a still greater treat is Dr. Pusey's *Life* ; it is so thoroughly ' Liddonesque. ' "

In another letter of the same year :

" The little poem¹ you enclosed interests me greatly ; such a voice from the fourteenth century only proves that the same enthusiasms, the same longings of warm, loving and devoted hearts exist in all the ages of Christianity ; and that all shades of mere thought are merged in the deep personal love to the One Person Who, in His universal Humanity, is the attraction and the satisfaction of every being He has made capable of knowing Him."

¹ By Henry Suso, a monk in the convent at Constance, about 1400. Translated by Mrs. Bevan. The poem begins, " O Lord, the most Fair, the most Tender."

In 1897 :

" Wantage is always a most bracing and refreshing place ; the stalwartness and many-sidedness of Church life, the utter reality and consistency with which varied powers are all made to subserve one great end, makes one realise that the other life is everything ; (it is) the substance, the antitype, of which all here is the shadow—the type.

" We had an interesting conference of the Educational Sisters, which will lead, I trust, to the forming of a union of those who care for education only in so far as it is religious. You say your work has been scrappy : has it not rather been the ploughing and harrowing for a harvest whose fruits you can never see until the other side is reached ? "

In 1898 she writes of " an addition to my household in a Maratha girl of twenty-five, who is working for her Higher Local Certificate, hoping to teach in India," and adds : " I think perhaps this is the way in which I am to take part in a work for which every English man and woman is responsible—the Christianising of India."

After a visit to the Roman wall at Hexham :

" It was extremely interesting, and made one realise the amazing power of the world-conquering people who, in such a remote corner of the world, could build right across Britain a wall seven feet thick and eleven high, with forts at each mile, and stations, camps, villas, bridges all along the line, besides a fosse and vallum running parallel with it all the way, over hill and dale, with undaunted persistence ; countless altars and inscriptions and quantities of coins and pottery have been found and collected in a beautifully arranged museum."

After the death of Queen Victoria :

" I knew . . . that our hearts were together alike in the sorrow and the thankfulness with which we have

thought of our beloved Queen ; with more of the thankfulness than even of the grief ; and the one will increase while the other decreases. How one pities the nations which, having no sovereigns, cannot ever know the glow of ennobling love that we feel throbbing through the Empire ! ”

And on the postponed coronation of Edward VII :

“ Has it not been wonderfully solemn and beautiful ? I think God is training England for her great vocation, if only she can respond, and recognise His call ; but there is much that saddens one, chiefly the Sunday desecration : still the hope always lies in the ‘ remnant,’ and they are amongst us even when we know it not. Do read the Lives of Sir J. Paget and of Felicia Skene, if you have not yet done so.”

In the chilly March weather of 1901 she writes :

“ The winter has been a very sunless and trying one here, and spring is slow in coming under a grey sky with a bitter N.E. wind ; but withal the sweet birds reprove our thankless hearts with ceaseless song ; there is a dear blackbird who sits on a tree outside my window and sings his matins and evensong, no matter what the weather is.”

She discusses educational movements in Canada, wondering whether the keen American or Canadian teacher could accept the “ old-world ” ideas of a school like her own, and writes on many other topics which space will not admit of mentioning here. “ I am struck afresh in reading through her letters,” writes the friend to whom they were written, “ by the way in which she links every happening, whether the interests and anxieties of the school or the most important public events, with God Himself, and thus sees all in its true perspective and proportion.”

Times of anxiety there were, and not infrequently, in the history of the High School ; there were trials which at times seemed almost to crush Miss Ottley's spirit :—disappointment, for instance, in some of those whom she had trusted implicitly, the failure of others to rise to her high ideals for them, wrongdoing among the children whom she loved so dearly. But even here, though “ sowing in tears,” she was sometimes allowed to “ reap in joy.” A member of her last Sixth Form writes :

“ Miss Ottley told us one day that one of the happiest days of her life was that on which she received a letter from a girl who had been sent away from school because no one could do anything with her, asking her if she might come with her to Holy Communion before going abroad as a missionary.”

There were occasions when the rapidity with which she formed her decisions proved a snare and led to errors of judgment ; occasions, too, when her fearless, unhesitating expression of her strong opinion was followed by misunderstanding or clashing of wills, and consequent trouble both for herself and for others.

Some there were at most times in the school, to whom her ideal did not appeal, girls who fretted and chafed under what seemed to them the trivial restraints of school life, and for these she had little sympathy. Absolutely disciplined herself, she could not brook the attitude of indifference, or the temper which scorned obedience in small matters, though the really naughty she always loved. “ I was generally in her black books, and deservedly,” writes an Old Girl, “ but I shall never forget her once when she discovered that I was unhappy as well as naughty. Some of us, who were half-frightened by her detachment and lofty ideals, never guessed the

depth of love and tenderness that went with them until some real trouble made her open her big heart to us."

Many even of those who chafed most against the spirit of discipline in the school found from the experience of later life that the rules which they thought irksome were indeed no mere conventional restraints, but the expression of a certain spirit which strove towards perfection, both in character and in work.

In the course of its twenty-one years of growth, the Worcester High School attained to a high place among schools, in respect of distinctions and honours gained both by present pupils, and by "Old Girls."

Various scholarships were founded in connexion with the school; the first "Ottley Scholarship" (held at St. Hugh's College, Oxford) was awarded in 1900 to Margaret Shuttleworth, daughter of the Head-master of the Cathedral Choir School, on the result of an examination in natural science.

"Our credit as a scientific school is at stake," wrote Miss Ottley to one of her Old Girls shortly before the examination.

The following "memory of the first Victoria Scholarship,"¹ won July 1902, has been contributed by one of the competitors:

"There were just two of us in for the Scholarship, which of course we both, quite naturally, hoped to win. We were to hear the result about three days after our last paper, and were having a holiday while the rest of the school were still working away at their examinations. On the third morning this is the note which came for

¹ For the daughter of a clergyman; founded in 1901 in memory of Queen Victoria, and connected by its conditions with the Victoria Clergy Sustentation Fund.

me, together with the envelopes bearing our 'letters' outside and the marks inside :

" ' MY DEAR DOROTHEA,—I think you will like to be the first to tell Ruth of her success and to congratulate her, so I send the result to you and not to her. I opened the envelopes at prayers this morning ; the detailed marks you can see to-morrow. I know it is a big disappointment to you, but you will take it bravely and cheerily, I feel sure.—Ever your affectionate,

' ALICE OTTLEY.'

" It was always Miss Ottley's way to make you only remember to be tremendously glad over others' success, at the moment when you would begin to be disappointed over your own failure."

In speaking at prize-givings of the honours gained by the school, Miss Ottley was fond of emphasizing the fact that they were won, not because the school was a particularly brilliant one, but because it cherished a strong tradition of thoroughness and conscientiousness in work.

VI

The summer of 1902 brought overwhelming sorrow for Miss Ottley. First a great trouble, not her own, but keenly felt by her, came on the day when the nation was rejoicing at the proclamation of peace after the Boer War, and dimmed its brightness. This was followed, on June 27, by the death in Worcester of her little niece, Kathleen, aged five, her " baby " as she called her, who, with two elder sisters, had been left in Miss Ottley's charge by her youngest brother (Herbert) during his tenure of an Indian chaplaincy. One week later, on July 5, her aged mother passed to her rest.

Little Kathleen was the pet of the school. It was she who, as youngest and newest child, planted an acacia

tree in front of Britannia House to commemorate the relief of Ladysmith.

On July 26, Miss Ottley wrote to a friend :

" It seems years since I last wrote to you, for just afterwards came that strange Coronation week with its revulsion of feeling for the whole Empire. School had been closed on the previous Friday, most mercifully for me, for through all the time I was nursing my 'baby,' the youngest of my three little nieces, in pneumonia. She was getting through that nicely, when meningitis supervened, and in a few hours she was gone.

" Just a week later I was summoned by telegram to go to my sister, for my mother had been taken to her rest. It still seems like a dream from which I must awaken to see my bonny little merry Kathleen come running in for her morning kiss, with her little hands full of flowers from her own garden. . . . It has been very touching and beautiful to see how the children have felt that the Master has come near and gathered a lily from our garden. They have tried so hard to be good, and have kept the little grave lovely with fresh flowers ever since. Four of the mistresses carried the little white coffin ; the chapel¹ was full of girls all in white, and the grave was lined with ferns and white roses, so nothing gloomy came near my pretty one. . . . When the fuller, other life comes so near, it helps one to see how little it matters what the Master gives us to do here, so only that we do it with Him and for Him."

Already at this time Miss Ottley's dreams for the final completion of her school buildings were beginning to be realised. In December 1901 she wrote in *White and Blue* :

" May the Editor be allowed to whisper a suggestion to ' Old Girls ' ? The ' Old Boys ' of the Cathedral

¹ The first part of the burial service was in S. Oswald's chapel.

King's School have given to their Alma Mater a much-needed gymnasium. Will 'Old Girls' here do something of the same kind? A gymnasium is urgently needed, somewhat larger than the one just put up by the 'Old Boys'; (here follow suggestions for raising money). We only throw the seed-thought; will any foster its growth and promote its fruition?"

Following numbers of the magazine show how warmly the project was taken up by old and present girls, and by many other friends of the school. By dint of donations, collecting-cards, concerts, dramatic entertainments, a garden fête, and finally a sale of work, the large sum required was gradually raised. In the summer of 1903 the Council began to build, and on October 24 of the same year the gymnasium, a spacious and airy building fitted with complete apparatus, was formally opened by Lady Beauchamp.

But another "seed-thought" was meanwhile maturing in Miss Ottley's mind—the celebration of the school's twenty-first birthday by a great gathering of old girls and mistresses. The numbers expected were so large that the gathering could not take place in June, while the work of the term was going on; and thus the birthday had a double celebration—on June 18 for the present school, and on July 27, when school had broken up, for the Old Girls.

On Monday, June 20, the actual birthday, each child on arriving at school found in her pigeon-hole a small white booklet, bearing on the outside in blue lettering,

WORCESTER HIGH SCHOOL,
June 20, 1883-1904,

and containing a brief letter :

" June 20, 1904.

" MY DEAR CHILDREN,—I should like to mark this day by giving to each one of you something which will be of use to you all through your life ; and I have chosen words which have helped me ever since, as a child, I learned them, and even more and more as the passing years have explained their meaning. The purpose of the High School will be fulfilled if everyone of you is—

' . . . careful less to serve God much
Than to please Him perfectly.'

" Your affectionate Head-mistress,
" ALICE OTTLEY."

This was followed by Miss Waring's well-known hymn, beginning

" Father, I know that all my life
Is portioned out for me," &c.,

to which, as a motto, were prefixed the words, " My times are in Thy Hand " ; " To obey is better than sacrifice."

The long looked-for gathering of July 27 was declared by Miss Ottley to have been the happiest occasion of her life. Over two hundred met at the altar of the Cathedral at 8 A.M., when the precentor, the Rev. H. H. Woodward, was celebrant, and the Bishop (Gott) of Truro pronounced the Absolution and the Blessing. He also preached to the " congregation, special among special congregations " after Cathedral matins, and was one among other chief guests at the garden-party at the High School in the afternoon. Among those whom Miss Ottley had the delight of welcoming were the Bishop of Ely and Lady Alwyne Compton, the daughters of Dean Butler, and other first promoters of the school ; and in the course of the afternoon her " First Brood " presented her with a little enamel brooch in the shape of the lily of the

school, with its motto affixed. The *conversazione* in the evening, to which only former mistresses and girls were invited, ended with "Auld Lang Syne," sung with crossed arms in several circles round the hall, followed by deafening cheers for Miss Ottley. She responded with one of her happiest little speeches, beginning "My dear children," and then apologising for having done so, and ending with a strong appeal to those who were mothers to give religion the first place in the training of their children.

What Miss Ottley was to her "Old Girls" may be told in words of their own. One, whose home is in Worcester, wrote after her death :

"My abiding recollection of Miss Ottley is that of one in whose presence I felt not only the desire to be my best self, but that best self indeed. Yet there was always perfect ease with her ; to meet her was to meet the most amusing and refreshing person in the world, a person to whom anything could be said without fear of misunderstanding. In every fibre one felt the better for but a few minutes' intercourse. She made holiness attractive, and a thing seemingly within the reach of all. The other thing that impressed one was the way in which she bore each of her old girls in her heart. We went to her with any trivial achievement, any little plan, sure of her welcoming smile and keen interest, as though there was no one else in the world that mattered. It is only since losing her that we have realised all that her presence in Worcester meant to us."

And another, who came to Worcester before the school was three years old, and since leaving has spent most of her life out of England, has written :

"It is not possible to write all that memory brings back of that intercourse with the Head, unbroken and strengthening through years of absence ; every Worcester

girl knows it for herself, and all can fill in their own forms of remembrance. The tie that held us to her can never be broken, although the happiness of the outward signs of it has been taken from us. The strength of it came, and comes, from her, not from us, as the greater must include the less ; and because it depends on her, and not on us, we know that the power and the beauty of it cannot be touched by death, and we hold to it now and always.

" And with that bond that holds us to her, is entwined the undying loyalty to the school, given by her, and carried on by us, not to be shaken by time or circumstance.

" The only words that seem to express what we feel in trying to write of her, are Browning's :

' I touch,
But cannot praise, I love so much.' "

Her private letters show, if anything is needed to show, how lovingly she followed the careers of her Old Girls all over the world.

The following is an extract from a letter written in 1901 :

" It was our Guild gathering yesterday, always to me a thrilling time. The little chapel at S. Oswald's was packed with Old Girls, very many of them married, and some from great distances, who were staying in Worcester for it ; so there were delightful meetings of old friends, who had much to say to one another, and we had some lovely music from girls who are now leading violinists and pianists. I heard one Old Girl saying to a VIth form girl, ' Why, S., I had left school before you were born ! ' Then the mothers were comparing their experiences, and funny reminiscences of school days were recalled. Life becomes wonderfully interesting as one touches these succeeding generations. One of my children is just going out to Africa to teach in the

Boer Concentration camps ; another is taking up work as an inspector under Government of the 'boarding-out' of workhouse children ; another is staying with the Sirdar at Khartoum ; another is just starting for teaching work in South America ; and then the great bond of common and mutual prayer circles the world and we are one ; and His unchanging Love, Who makes us one, follows each to the sphere of work to which He calls her."

And in her address a few years later, on the occasion of a school prize-giving, after mentioning the "good work they [Old Girls] are doing all over the world as teachers, nurses, missionaries, secretaries, in various kinds of social work, and, above all, as wives and mothers,"¹ she went on to tell how a hospital sister, asking if there were not another "Old Girl" for her, had said, "We like your girls, because they know how to obey, a rare thing nowadays ; and they are always punctual, orderly, self-controlled, and entirely trustworthy."

"While this is the hall-mark of Worcester girls," she said, "I am content."

¹ Miss Ottley always took a pride in recording on speech-days the number of marriages which had taken place amongst her Old Girls during the past year, and the increase in the number of the school's "grandchildren."

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER V

I

THE SCHOOL HYMN

CARMEN SCHOLÆ PUELLARUM APUD
CIVITATEM VIGORNIENSEM

Candida Rectaque.

Hæc cogitate : Hæc agite.

Monitum.

Stella tamquam luce splendens
est puella candida ;
sole purior ascendens
cæli tangit limina ;
desuper ut lampas pendens
clara reddit omnia.

Quae puella recta fovet,
Deum sequens Dominum,
illa tamquam magnes movet
vaga corda hominum :
prodest semper, quae se vovet
sequi recta ad terminum.

Repromissio.

Candida, recta, cupienda,
lilia inter frutices ;
recta, candida, educenda,
quales dei segetes ;
hæc sigilla imprimenda
curent cæli virgines.

Candida, recta, nos volemus—
lilia inter frutices ;
recta, candida, nos agemus—
Dei bonæ segetes ;
Christi semper nos feremus
signa—cæli virgines.

TRANSLATION

SONG FOR THE HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS AT
WORCESTER

Candida Rectaque.
So think : so do.

Call.

Like a star of gentle lustre
Shines a maiden pure in heart ;
Fair as morning sun she riseth ;
On her heavenly path to start ;
From her, as from lamps' clear radiance,
Shades of evil far depart.

And the maid who straightly followeth
In the steps of Christ her Lord,
As a magnet ever draweth
Wandering hearts with one accord ;
Straight her way, where'er it leadeth,
With strong help her life is stored.

Response.

Shining white, and straight aspiring
As the lilies 'midst the flowers ;
White and straight, and fruitful growing
As the corn in ripening hours ;
These be watchwords ever cherished,
Richest of all maiden's dowers.

" White and straight "—this be our promise,
As of lilies 'midst the flowers ;
" Straight and white "—this its fulfilment,
As of corn in ripening hours ;
Ever bearing Christ's own tokens,
Guarded round by heavenly powers.

E. H. H.

Tune

CARMEN SCHOLÆ PUELLARUM

H. H. WOODWARD.

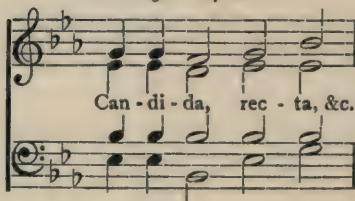
mf 1. Stel - la tam - quam lu - ce splen - dens est pu - el - la

can - di - da: *cres.* so - le pu - ri - or as - cen - dens

dim. cæ - li tan - git li - mi - na; *cres.* de - su - per ut

lam - pas pen - dens cla - ra red - dit om - ni - a.

Verses 3 and 4 thus :



II

Miss Ruth Young, secretary of the Association of Head-mistresses, formerly a pupil of the Oxford High School, writes :

“ When I was appointed secretary in 1902, Miss Ottley had been a Vice-President for seven years. After the creation of Local Education Authorities under the Act of 1902, Worcester invited the Head-mistresses' Association to nominate a member to serve on the County Education Authority, and, at the President's invitation, Miss Ottley accepted service. Notwithstanding the arduous duties which devolved upon her in this connexion, she also attended meetings of the executive Committee of the Association regularly until the time when the committees of the two bodies were fixed for the same date. Then Miss Ottley felt, to her regret, that her local meetings claimed priority of attendance.

“ I have always felt that to watch Miss Ottley's face, and to be near her was, spiritually, to touch the hem of a saint's garment. I shall never forget the first time that I came for a few brief moments under her influence. It was in 1889, when the Oxford High School tennis team and members of the club were entertained at the Worcester High School, on the occasion of a school tournament. The grace of her courtesy made one feel no longer

a stranger. I think it was this lovely and lovable grace of presence which was always felt at the Head-mistresses' meetings, and which was always regarded as precious by members of the Association. So much so, that an unprecedented step was taken last June¹ in despatching a telegram of greeting to her from the Conference assembled at S. Paul's Girls' School."

¹ 1912.

CHAPTER VI

THE TEACHER

"Pasce Agnos Meos."

"Pasce verbo : pasce vita."

"Cristes lore and His Apostles' twelve
He taught : but first he folwed it himselve."

CHAUCER.

AMONG all the gifts bestowed on Alice Ottley, none was more conspicuous, none more joyfully exercised, than her gift for teaching ; and perhaps there is nothing that may be more fruitfully sought by those who are called to follow in her steps than the secret of her power and its attendant joy.

In a paper which she wrote in 1902, for a meeting of the Archbishops' Council for Secondary Education, she urges the great importance of encouraging study and providing Church Certificates in Theology for teachers of Divinity ; and then she continues : "Of course I realise that other and more important qualifications are requisite for a true teacher of religious subjects, than any course of study can give, or any examination test ; and that the spiritual force which gives life and reality to such teaching can only be gained from the Source of all light and life, the Holy Spirit of God : but *this is true of all educational work.*" We have italicised the last words because they sum up what was undoubtedly true of all her own work as a teacher. She never could, nor would, draw any hard and fast line between sacred and secular ; everything for her had its roots in the Divine,

and she realised that it was only in the light of God that we could ever "see light" in any subject of study.

I

It has already been told how early she was called to teach those younger than herself in her old home at Richmond; and to the last there was no part of her work, it is safe to say, that she loved so much as teaching. "It is a love that grows with its own satisfaction, and a work which brings so immediate and rich a reward that one has to guard against its becoming so absorbing in itself that one may forget for Whom all must be done." Thus she wrote in later days to one of her Worcester children, who had just gone to her first post as a teacher, and every phrase is characteristic—the sheer delight in giving out her rich stores, the keen satisfaction in the response which her teaching always called forth, and the controlling force of the thought of Him for Whom she was "feeding the lambs,"—a thought which kept her teaching so fresh and strong and wholesome to the last.

The ripe fruit of her own thought on the subject and the outcome of her experience as a teacher are best set forth in her own words in an address given, in June 1911, to the Birmingham branch of St. Peter's Guild for elementary school teachers:

"Thirty years ago there was a sort of clamouring among teachers in England to get 'teaching' to rank as a 'profession'; to have teachers recognised as 'professional men and women,' as doctors and lawyers are. It was the women especially who were so keen about this; they were the same sort of women who would be Suffragists to-day; they had much right and reason on their side; they were very persistent; and—they won.

"Nobody doubts to-day that teaching is a profession, and an honoured profession, and one in which men and

women work side by side, each helping the other ; and I think, without undue conceit, we may say that, on the whole, the women have taken the lead in a noble onward movement in education. All this is good ; good that our hearts should go out to all the members of our own profession, that we are keen that all should maintain its honour and continue the noble traditions that were made by the pioneers, an Arnold and a Thring, a Miss Buss and a Miss Beale, and countless others.

" But all this falls far short of the true nobility of our work. In those early days there was a very real danger of a merely material view of this newly dubbed ' profession ' ; it was in peril of becoming a trade—so much work for so much pay and no more. There was a danger lest, in the eagerness for the profession, we should lose sight of the infinitely higher aspect of the teaching life ; and forget that it is a vocation ; that we ' come not to our place by accident,' but were called to it by God—speaking to us perhaps through our circumstances, but certainly ' calling ' us to an honour incomparably greater than any this world can give ; calling us to be ' fellow-workers with Him,' in His great work of educating the world.

" It is very wonderful, but it is absolutely true, that God wills to do this work, not directly by His own immediate action on each individual child, but by means of other human beings ; and that He has called us, you and me, to be His helpers in it ; He bids us, as He did S. Paul, ' Rise and stand on thy feet,' ready and willing to go where I shall send thee ; not mere tools, but rising, with our own freewill, to do the part He has chosen for us, in carrying out His plans for each one of the children He gives to our care.

" Does it not make life splendidly well worth living, when we realise that God has chosen us for such a career as this ? that He has given each of us certain powers, certain opportunities, just to enable us to do the particular part of the great whole, without which it cannot be perfected.

" Your great Birmingham thinker, arguing from

scientific grounds, said not long ago just the same thing as S. Paul had said by the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit nearly two thousand years ago. Sir Oliver Lodge said, 'We are here to help God'; S. Paul said, 'We are workers together with God.'

"As we should expect, God's revelation of Himself in science, corroborates His revelation of Himself in the Bible; only the Bible goes deeper, reveals more of the amazing 'length and breadth and depth and height' of that 'love of God which passeth knowledge.' He not only honours us by letting us share His work; He tells us it is not as mere servants that we are set to do our task; He draws us into His confidence; He explains to us what His ideals are, that we may share them.

"Let us try to go back in thought to the evening of Maundy Thursday in the upper room in Jerusalem; the first Eucharist was just over; the traitor was gone out into the darkness to do his deed, and the first Communicants were alone with their Master. He was giving them His last teachings before He left them to carry on His work in the world; and see what He says: '*Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.*' He had taken them into His full confidence, as a man takes his intimate friends, and told them His plans for the world, because He had chosen them as His helpers to carry them out. Now let us pass on from the upper room through the blank misery of the rest of that Thursday night and of the awful Friday, through the hopelessness of Saturday, to the dawn of the first Easter; when a faint rumour, which they could not believe, reached them from one and another, that He had been seen, and in the evening they had gathered together again in that same upper room; and quietly, suddenly, as they were talking of Him, He, their beloved LORD, their Master, their Friend, Whom they thought they had lost, was standing there amongst them; He was with them again; and again His message was, '*as my Father hath sent Me, even so send I you*'; they

were to go on with His work. But then, even while they looked and listened, He was gone from their sight.

"And all through the forty days that followed, it happened again and again; wherever they might be, walking along the road, on the mountain, by the lake, in the room, at any moment they might see Him; He was teaching them that He was always there, close to them, whether they saw Him or not; that He was a spiritual Being, and had a supernatural life. At last, on another Thursday, they again walked with Him down into the Cedron valley and up the hillside to a quiet spot, where He talked with them, with words of blessing on His lips; once more He disappeared from their sight, not again to show Himself visibly to them in their earthly life; but they had learnt that He was always there, close beside them; and they were filled 'with great joy'; and went forth to do His work, not only for Him but with Him.

"Are we inclined to ask, 'What is all this to us? These were His chosen Apostles, He does not say all this to us.' Ah, but that is just what He does. See the words He uses as He sends them forth, 'Lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the world.' With whom? Who can those 'you' be? Those eleven have long passed out of the world, and the promise goes on still. They were then the Church, and it is to His Church that He speaks. It is to *all* His chosen ones, to His whole Church—chosen, and called to work for Him; and because we are of His Church, baptized and communicants, He says to us as He did to those communicants, 'I have called you friends: I have chosen you that ye should go and bring forth much fruit.' It is you and I now that are to carry on His work—to carry out His ideals—perhaps in a rather special sense it is those of us whom He calls to be teachers, because teaching was so evidently, so directly, His definite work on earth. JESUS CHRIST is the great Educator, the great Trainer of teachers; the first training college was the little band whom He was preparing for their work. While psycho-

logists and theorists think they are finding out something quite new, He Who knows the working of the minds He made, has always trained them on the very principles that the writers of to-day have come to perceive are the scientific ones.

“ But if we are indeed called to work with Him, we must first of all know (1) what the object is which He is working to attain, and (2) by what means He works towards it. His end is to educate each soul ; ‘ to draw out,’ to cultivate all that is best in each, not the intellectual powers only or mainly, but the whole being of every one ; to train the mind, to cultivate and control the affections, above all to inspire and direct the will. He teaches them to think ; He shows them whom and how they are to love ; He braces up their resolves ; above all He makes them feel that the spiritual is far more real than the material ; that all the time He is living a supernatural life. And this He does chiefly by living with them His own perfect life of constant prayer and toil, by being Himself all that He would have them be ; it was the holy infection of goodness.

“ And if we are His friends and fellow-workers, we must work for His objects and use His methods. Each child we have to teach we must strive to make the best of, in all its different faculties, by all the means He gives us ; but *the* power which alone can really mould them is our own life lived with Him ; His life reflected in ours ; a supernatural life.

“ Rightly we feel that our miserable and faulty lives cannot attract and raise and inspire ; but He has taught us that if we will only obediently do the work He gives us day by day, He will do the rest ; for He is with us every moment. That was the lesson He taught His own in those mysterious forty days ; while they felt Him so truly there that at any moment they might see Him. That is what we have to realise now : He is here ; listening to the lesson I give ; watching me ; seeing my thoughts and motives ; ready to help, to suggest, to recall to my mind, by His Holy Spirit, all I want to recollect. Yes, as He Himself in His Humanity was

filled with the Spirit, so He has given us this same Spirit to fill our being.

"Try it when you will ; if you are puzzled and cannot see what to do, just call to the Spirit for counsel ; when you feel, ' This is too hard, I cannot do it,' call to the Spirit for ghostly strength.¹ You will find five, nay, three minutes of prayer, will bring just what you want, put you back into touch with the Master ; and then we, too, can lead the supernatural life, can dwell in Christ and He in us ; our weakness will be made perfect in His strength ; our poor work taken into His perfect scheme. Like the Gobelin tapestry at Sèvres, we see only a little detached bit. The Master on the other side sees the whole glorious picture going on towards the perfection He has planned ; He, our LORD, rejoices in His work in each soul, He sees of the travail of His soul and is satisfied ; and one day, when we have done our little part, we too shall pass to the other side and see what it meant ; and if we have humbly and faithfully striven to do what He puts before us now, if we have shared His work, we shall surely share His joy when He comes again rejoicing, and brings His sheaves with Him. Even we may hear the wonderful words, ' Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' "

If this address points us to the secret of Miss Ottley's inspiration as a teacher, the following account, written by one who, during many years, heard her teach in the preparatory department of the Worcester High School, gives us a graphic description of her way of teaching little children :

"For one half-hour each week, at 12 o'clock, Miss Ottley came to the kindergarten room, where the little

¹ A former Student-mistress remembers Miss Ottley advising her and her fellow-students if they found themselves at a loss in the examination they were just going in for, to stop for a minute and say the "Veni Creator."

chairs stood in rows, filled by the children as they trooped in from drill, for the final lesson of that morning. The week's marks were first read by her. Very quickly, with her accustomed penetration, and close acquaintance with each child, she commented on these, always warmly to those who had done well, bidding the others 'Give a good clap,'—gravely and hopefully to those who lagged behind, generally adding, 'Was it *very* difficult? Well, it will be better next week.'

"Then the children repeated the last-learned verse of a hymn. Miss Ottley was very particular that this should be done clearly and with true emphasis. She generally asked questions as to the meaning of words, and if she especially liked a hymn, also said so and why. The children rarely forgot this comment; indeed from the moment when they sprang to their feet to greet her as she came in, she held their unflagging interest and attention.

"When the hymn was said they all settled themselves for the story.

"Miss Ottley knew the Old Testament Scriptures with extraordinary thoroughness; no detail escaped her, while her fine sympathy with the minds of children gave her power to use her profound and scholarly knowledge with wonderful aptness and delicacy. Believing as she did in these Scriptures, as the great preparatory revelation of the Will of God, she showed the children, as in a series of vivid pictures, 'the Lord, a God full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.'

"No opportunity of using the witness of the Old Testament to the coming JESUS was ever lost.

"The little faces grew very earnest and intent, when, in a lowered voice, Miss Ottley told of the MAN with the drawn sword Who came to Joshua before beleaguered Jericho, or of Balaam's reluctant vision of the Star and Sceptre.

"The Bible children, Joseph, Moses, Miriam, Samuel,

Josiah, the little Hebrew maid, became real little boys and girls, engaged in very interesting tasks, loving, playing, working, suffering as any child might, but nevertheless called of God and contributing to His design.

"The glorious campaign of the timid Gideon, the romantic youth of David, the tragedy of Samson's pride of strength, and of Saul's envy, related in simplest words within the grasp of the youngest child, stood forth as living testimonies to the righteousness of the covenant-keeping God.

"Miss Ottley's questions never fitted a stereotyped reply; children found no use for the thoughtless employment of sacred words and phrases that is so sadly common. The lessons were essentially natural, and full of simple human feeling, but at the same time deeply reverent. No child ever regarded her Bible lesson as an occasion for the adoption of solemn looks or constrained behaviour; a little happy laugh, never suppressed, often followed some appreciated point. 'This is my favourite day, because Miss Ottley comes'—'I do like her coming and telling us those stories out of the Bible, they're nicer than any of the book stories,' were types of many quite unsolicited comments.

"Attention was never enforced, it was always spontaneously given, perhaps because simplicity of language never descended to feebleness; sin was not palliated, goodness never sentimentalised—the '*All-Great*' was 'the All-Loving too.'

"The following story shows Miss Ottley's ready understanding of children's interests:

"One day, when she was giving the little children their weekly Bible lesson, a mouse that had previously discovered that a waste-paper basket, barren before lunch, became a land of plenty later, advanced boldly into the quiet room.

"The children saw it, and with a murmur of 'there's our mouse,' craned forward or rose on tiptoe to watch the tiny deft movements of the little creature as it darted towards spilt crumbs.

"'Oh! so there is,' said Miss Ottley, and stood

watching it herself until held breaths gave out, and the little stir drove it back to cover in the wainscoting.

" ' There, it has finished and gone home, now we'll go on with our story.' "

" The diverted attention flowed back naturally, and the lesson proceeded with no break in the perfect sympathy that always kindled every word."

II

In the upper classes of the High School, Miss Ottley used, in the earlier days, to give entrancing lessons on the derivations of words and on English literature, as well as Divinity, which latter remained her " special subject " right to the end ; though, as the school grew large, and the calls on her time ever more exacting, she was not able to teach in every Form. But she was ever ready to take a lesson, if a mistress were ill or absent ; and whatever the subject might be, she always gave it a new and hitherto undreamt-of charm. For she understood instinctively how to rouse and keep the interest of children of any age or capacity. She could put herself in their place, and see with their minds ; she never " talked down " to them ; but she brought the subject—theology, grammar, French, German, drawing, writing, or what not—at once into such close vital relations with the class, that everybody, herself included, found themselves absorbed in it.

Of course she knew just what to select from any subject to make it capable of " educating " the particular class she was dealing with : and nowhere was her judgment in this respect shown more finely than in her Divinity lessons. Always the impression she left was clear and definite ; always the human, natural touch was there ; but at the same time she spoke with such a sense of the awful mystery of divine things, she was so

possessed with the thought of the wonders of the revelation of God, that in the teaching of the Scripture and Creed and Catechism, the most lasting impression she left of herself on those she taught, was of the intense reverence and humility with which the truths of religion must be treated. There was no vague, tentative, or shifting grasp of the verities of the Faith—quite the contrary; but there was nothing of the cut-and-dried dogmatism which sometimes treats the great mysteries of Christianity with familiarity, and tends to make them appear to the young almost commonplace: to her, everything she touched was thrilled through and through with the divine light of life; everything was bathed in the atmosphere of wonder.

Her children could not of course realise at the time *what* made her lessons, especially those in Divinity, so attractive, so compelling; but in thinking it over in later life, they remember how she never seemed to impose her views on them, and yet how all she taught seemed to call forth the unhesitating consent of their own faculties, intuitively grasping the truth because it seemed made for them and they for it; how she used all sorts of sidelights from passing events, or from their school or home experience, to illustrate her lessons; how she made the most of the suggestions given in the answers given to her questions, even when the answer was not the right one; how she never made anybody feel small or stupid when they blundered or could only half express a thought, but treated their attempt with a sort of charming respect, which drew them on to use the utmost of their capacity, so that they were less afraid to risk their own ideas in contribution to a lesson with her than with any other mistress. As she wrote in a paper on Catechising for the Worcester Diocesan Conference (1900):

"The teacher or catechiser must have a cheery voice ; a natural, simple, 'talking' manner ; a little sense of humour, reverently restrained ; quickness to see and hear every separate child and to catch what it means, even although it cannot adequately express its own thought ; and (needless to say), above all, a real love for, and sympathy with, children. And, moreover, as the 'Education in Christianity' (as Bishop Dupanloup defines it) is committed to him, his teaching must appeal to every part of the child's inner being — the intellect, imagination, affections must all be drawn out and consecrated to their highest use ; but in very different proportions, according to the age and capacity of the children.

"In the younger children, memory is the most developed faculty ; but imagination is vivid, and the affections are warm ; these facts direct us in the method and sequence of teaching ; now is the time to fix firmly and accurately in the young minds the formula of the Faith ; in other words, to insist that the Church Catechism shall be learnt *perfectly* ; to be said slowly, and with absolute correctness of enunciation as to every letter of every word ; in school, to be written, copying it in the first instance, afterwards writing it from memory, with minute attention to every stop and every capital letter.

"Then must follow very simple explanation, rather of words than of doctrines ; bright and interesting, appealing to the imagination, illustrated when feasible by pictures or stories ; and eliciting by quick, definite questions, addressed to individual children, their own thoughts and difficulties, and never using set phrases or expressions that are unreal to a child.¹ My experience is that ten minutes is the longest time that little children can keep their attention fixed on one subject ;

¹ In connexion with this care for "reality" there is a tradition that a First Form child, on being asked, after a lesson with Miss Ottley, what was meant by "the pomps and vanities of this wicked world," promptly replied : "It means filling my head with my Sunday hat."

and that to instil one new idea, after reiterating previous instructions, is all that can wisely be attempted at one time.

"Naturally a teacher prepares more matter than will probably be used in a lesson, and his own sympathetic insight will show him when the little ones will have had enough.

"But, after all, this most necessary teaching of the Christian Faith is but dry and barren work unless Christian motives and Christian practice grow up with it ; and here the little ones are ready to respond, and can be easily moulded through their quick affection and imitative faculty."

Miss Ottley's own practice is remembered by one of her children, now a Head-mistress, who writes :

"I recall her teaching us in quite a junior form about our Lord's Birth—that we must never speak of St. Joseph as His father, for God the Holy Ghost, supplied the part of the earthly father, and there was no need for anyone else. It was a wonderful bit of teaching, simply given, to hold our attention as children, but pregnant with meaning to meet the fuller knowledge of our later years."

And a student who was trained at Worcester writes :

"Two great joys and privileges were mine whilst there—of attending Miss Ottley's sixth-form Divinity lessons on S. John, and of listening to her Bible stories told to the kindergarten. On those mornings in the kindergarten, one was a little child once more, thrilled with keen excitement, as vivid pictures of Samson's feats of strength and the pastoral idyll of Ruth were unrolled by the Head, who recorded with dramatic simplicity the Old Testament stories, her dear face wearing a reminiscent smile, as though she herself had seen the happenings which she recounted with such sympathy to the children.

"Quite different were the sixth-form Divinity lessons ; here were called into play all her deep theological knowledge and understanding. Never limiting herself to the capacity of the girls, she gave herself forth unsparingly, with the result that her hearers gained just the help and direction needed to stimulate and balance their inquiring minds."

Often her teaching went beyond their grasp at the time, but they made their notes, and they got their bearings, and, ever afterwards, a book they had studied with Miss Ottley was like a treasure-house of which they possessed the key.

Miss Ottley made a great point of training her children to search the Bible for themselves, and in the middle school the preparation she set, nearly always consisted in illustrating some point by finding a certain number of Bible references to bear upon it. In such work, she exacted the utmost clearness and accuracy in statement as well as in arrangement : her standard was high, and she could not tolerate anything illogical or careless or ill-considered ; so her remarks after correcting were eagerly looked at, and a word of commendation like " thoughtful " or " well worked out " was prized indeed.

Her views on the teaching of the Old Testament may be gathered from a passage in a letter to one of her Old Girls, now herself a High School mistress, who had written to ask advice on the subject :

" This is a very real difficulty ; all depends upon the age and capacity of the children ; to quite little ones I should tell the old stories, as they were told to us ; but when they are intelligent enough to understand what ' literature ' means, I should show them how God used the literature of the Jews, with its myths, histories, drama, poetry, biography, &c., as a means of teaching purely *spiritual* truths, and gradually educating the nation to prepare for the full truth of the Gospel ; so

that we are not to expect to find scientific or historical facts taught in the Bible, but only a gradual revelation of God, which was to culminate in the *full* revelation in Our LORD Himself.

"This is only a partial answer, but books could be written without exhausting the details."¹

Of the Church Catechism, Miss Ottley wrote in the Diocesan Conference paper from which quotation has already been made :

"Every teacher, who has tried it, knows that the Church Catechism is an inexhaustible repertory of pure theology, both in faith and practice, and makes a basis on which everything a Christian ought to know and do may well be taught ; and, moreover, the dogmatic theology contained or implied in it can be made as interesting and inspiring a study as any other."

"An inspiring study"—that was the beginning and middle and end of it all. Alice Ottley's idea of teaching was the imparting of *inspiration*. Whatever the subject-matter, whatever its intrinsic interest or importance, she never forgot that the ultimate aim of all teaching is to educate for the after life in the world and beyond it. She was keenly alive to the needs and problems of the day and of the immediate future ; and this thought, expressed in a letter to a Canadian friend in 1896, may well close this chapter :

"What may not the children we are educating now live to see ? And how unspeakably important the development of their principles is, in view of their probable future. The powers of the world and of Christ seem to be more and more arraying themselves in opposite camps : and no vacillating half allegiance will stand the stress of the conflict."

¹ See also the paper read before the Head-mistresses' Conference in the appendix to this chapter.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VI

A paper written for the Conference of the Head-mistresses' Association, held at Manchester High School, June 1908.

" It is with extreme diffidence, and only in obedience to our President, whose wish is law for me, that I venture to approach this weighty and difficult subject, the more so because I am conscious that my teaching and methods have always been empirical; that I have really no theory to propound as to the method, or even the matter, of Divinity teaching; but I am increasingly anxious as to its *manner*. I think that in the great increase of intelligent Biblical study, I observe a growing danger of its true object becoming obscured by the very keenness of the interest awakened in questions of ancient history, geography, ethnology, of language and forms of literature. We have found more and more that this wonderful library, which was gradually formed through many centuries, is a marvellous record of the evolution of thought, and throws light upon every department of the study of the past; and it is only too easy to make such matters the main topics of Bible lessons. With young teachers, who have taken Divinity as a *subject*, and to whom all this has come as a new and most delightful discovery, it is specially so; and it behoves us now, first, to recall the true object of reading the Bible, and, secondly, to consider the manner by which that object will be best attained.

" The object, I think we shall all agree, is simply the attaining to some nearer approach to a knowledge of God, in so far as, with our limited capacity, we can apprehend something of the incomprehensible. Pope tells us 'the proper study of mankind is man': true, because we are human; but only a half truth, because we are also divine; and therefore beyond lies the other half: 'the proper study of mankind is God.' And the Bible is above all things the gradual revelation of Himself to man, which God has been pleased to make throughout the ages, culminating in the supreme revelation in

JESUS CHRIST ;—implicit in the Old Testament, explicit in the New. Hence it demands, in teachers and taught, the exercise of powers other in kind than those used in what are (so wrongly) called merely secular subjects ; it needs the arousing of the *spiritual* faculty by which we apprehend spiritual realities ; it demands the co-operation of the affections, and the response of the will, not merely to the noblest conceivable system of ethics, but further, to the conception of the God to Whom the devotion of our whole being is due. This it is which makes the personality of the teacher so infinitely important. If it be a main factor in the teaching of all subjects, surely it is pre-eminently essential in this, that the teacher should be equipped, not merely with knowledge and the power of imparting it, but with the deeply reverent tone of mind which can alone be receptive of spiritual truth.

“ It appears to me that only a teacher who desires it, and one who is genuine and consistent in her own religious life, and has considerable experience in dealing with children, should have the responsibility of touching the deepest springs of thought and action during the most impressionable years of life. I cannot accept the position that it is good for a mistress to teach her own form Divinity ;—it seems to me to be a case where the children must not be sacrificed to the supposed interests of the teacher ; a little indiscretion or exaggeration may do serious harm to these sensitive young souls, and a wise restraint is as needful as an inspiring enthusiasm. In no subject is the danger of attracting personal adoration more subtle and more real ; and only the strong and selfless teacher can divert this from herself and direct it Godwards.

“ Hence I would plead, not so much now for special courses of reading as a preparation for teaching Divinity—that happily has been practically carried *nem. con.*—but for a very careful selection of the individual teacher. There is nothing more infectious than tone of mind from teacher to taught ; the manner, the tone of voice, the very painstaking enunciation, not ‘ put on for the purpose ’ but the natural expression of deep reverence, will

inevitably affect the children and prepare them to approach the eternal truths, which are the pearls latent within the outer forms of Bible literature as something precious and sacred. I myself insist upon the distinct pronunciation of the *-ed* of the past tense and past participle in Bible reading, not merely to preserve the rhythm of the Elizabethan English, but also because it promotes the sense of something special and apart ; and I think we are suffering now from the effect of a revolt against the exaggerated, almost superstitious attitude towards the mere letter of the Bible in Puritan times ; and the opposite evil is upon us, in a lack of seriousness—of the reverential awe with which the devout soul should hearken to the message of God, howsoever conveyed. Naturally, the Bible lesson should be prefaced by a short prayer for the grace of the Holy Spirit, to illuminate the understanding, to inspire the affections and to direct the will, that what is read and taught may be apprehended, assimilated and practised ; and as far as possible contentious matter should be avoided, and criticism discouraged, and the different parts of the Bible used to explain and illustrate each other.

“ With younger children the simple stories of the Old and New Testaments—the connected histories of both, with the ethical teaching implied in them ; and, with elder girls, the training of the chosen people, and the gradual emergence of the revealed purpose of God for the human race, until it culminates in the redemptive work of the Messiah and the development of the Christian Church in the Apostolic writings ;—all this supplies abundant material for teaching throughout a whole school curriculum, and forms a solid basis upon which more advanced and technical study may afterwards be grafted by the few who have the power and the opportunity to pursue it. But through all, and more important than all, is the forming of a habit of mind which shall through life tend to make the reading of Holy Scripture that which we are told it should be, ‘ profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.’ ”

CHAPTER VII

“ A SUCCOURER OF MANY ” (Rom. xvi. 2)

“ A heart at leisure from itself
To soothe and sympathize.”

THE last chapter has shown Alice Ottley as “ the teacher.” This shall be devoted to picturing her, in some degree, in her larger relationship to the vast company of people who were privileged to call her their “ friend.”

Gifted as she was with an abundant share of the “ infinite Pity,” which “ alone is sufficient for the infinite pathos of human life,” to realise the need of another was, from her earliest years, the only thing necessary to call forth her sympathy and love. Small wonder that, as life went on, the number of her friends in all classes and ranks of people was ever on the increase ; the marvel was that she was able to keep in touch with so many.

I

No more charming picture of her, as she appeared to a stranger from a foreign land, could be given than in the “ *Réminiscences* ” of Mlle. de Sabatier-Plantier (French mistress at the High School during the last years of her rule), published in the “ Memorial Number ” of *White and Blue*, which was issued after her death :

“ Comme je me souviens encore du jour, déjà lointain, où, au lendemain d’un long voyage, Miss B—— me dit,

‘ Je vais aller vous présenter à Miss Ottley.’ Je ne la connaissais pas, mais j’avais reçu quelques lettres d’elle, et l’impression que m’avait laissée cette correspondance avait été fort agréable. Tous ceux qui ont reçu de ses lettres se souviennent combien elle écrivait d’une façon charmante à tout le monde, si vraiment affectueuse à ses amis.

“ Avec Miss B—— nous entrâmes dans la salle à manger. Aussitôt Miss Ottley se leva, me prit les mains, et me les serra en me souhaitant une telle bienvenue que toujours je me suis sentie vraiment bienvenue dans son école après ce jour. Elle avait accompagné ses paroles de ce sourire qu’on ne peut oublier et de son regard si clair, si profond, si plein d’inspiration. C’était fini,—appréhension ou timidité—tout avait disparu, et je sentis que j’allais avoir une directrice bonne, d’une extrême bonté et juste. Avec cela, tout travail devenait un plaisir.

“ Quelques jours après mon arrivée, jour de brouillard sans doute, je me trouvais de surveillance dans le grand vestiaire à deux heures et demie. Je me sentais très prise par le mal du pays qui nous atteint tous, plus ou moins, en terre étrangère. Miss Ottley vint à passer, et malgré mon sourire de salutation, elle comprit que la petite Méridionale regrettait son soleil. Quelques minutes après, je l’aperçus s’avançant vers moi, un plateau à la main. Je me préparais à le porter pour elle à quelque invitée de marque. Non, le plateau était por moi. ‘ Chère Mademoiselle, vous avez l’air triste. Voilà un peu de café noir pour vous rappeler votre belle France ; sans doute vous aimez le café ainsi, comme toutes vos compatriotes.’ Tout cela dit si simplement et avec tant d’affection, tout naturellement malgré les élèves qui arrivaient. L’attention si délicate m’avait tellement touchée au cœur, que je ne m’aperçus plus du gris de l’atmosphère et du milieu étranger qui m’entourait—le brouillard même me semblait du soleil.

“ Ce sont bien ces petits traits touchants qui nous rappellent notre chère Miss Ottley.

“ Malgré ses vastes occupations, son travail incessant,

son école pleine de monde—elle avait le don, l'intuition de deviner, de voir ce qui pouvait faire plaisir à chacun et de toujours l'offrir avec une courtoisie parfaite et une générosité sans égale et cela venant d'une telle personnalité—c'était unique—c'était Miss Ottley."

She was always the same, with all people and at all times. Whether engaging a kitchen-maid or entertaining the Worcester factory-girls, as she did at Christmas-time for many years, or acting as hostess on great occasions, she was always characterised by the same gentle dignity and tender consideration, combined with entire self-forgetfulness, which constituted in so large a measure her charm.

Her motherly tenderness invited the confidences of others, and her great gift of sympathy brought her much into contact with their troubles as well as their joys, and here she proved a very real "bearer of others' burdens," being often literally weighed down with the intensity of her realisation of such sorrows, and spending herself to the uttermost in her efforts for their alleviation. Numbers must look back in gratitude to the surmounting of trials and difficulties of all kinds by the help of her strong and wise counsel and her "sanctified common sense." "Her very greeting," writes an Old Girl, "was like a tonic, and you went forth refreshed; and wherever you were and however lonely, you knew that she cared, and that her sympathy and intercession went everywhere with you."

Separation and lapse of time made no difference in her friendship.

"What a wonderful gift," writes Mrs. McKenzie, that first friend of her childhood, "has been our friendship of sixty years! We have never been much together, never written much to each other, yet she was ever the true help to me that a real friend should be."

“ I can recall her so vividly now,” says another, “ looking up from the letter she was writing, or the exercise book she was correcting, with the smile of loving welcome, which you knew would always be yours, however long it was since you had seen her last.”

Writing herself, in 1899, to one of her Old Boys, she said : “ It is indeed a long time since we met, but the older I get (and I begin to feel very ancient), the more I realise that the passing of time does not make the slightest change in any friendship worthy of the name ; and I entirely believe that, what gives us so much joy here, is only a foretaste of the happiness in the real life beyond, which Keble calls the ‘ eternal leisure of calm love.’ ”

The utter simplicity of her nature, which precluded any possibility of ostentation, was another trait which endeared her to her friends. She used to tell how, when she first came to Worcester, a friend, more experienced than herself, advised her, when receiving the parents, always to dress a little better than the best-dressed of them was likely to be. “ And I resolved,” she said with a spice of fun, “ always to wear the worst that would do.”

The aunt of two of her children tells of her awe in being ushered into the presence of a formidable Headmistress, when calling for the first time to arrange about the education of her nieces, and of her delightful surprise when greeted with the winning smile and gracious manner of the little unalarming-looking lady who came to meet her, and drawing her on to the sofa by her side, proceeded to chat so pleasantly about the children and about many other subjects of mutual interest.

Never had anyone a greater knack of making people of all ages and circumstances feel at home than Miss

Ottley, because of her faculty of throwing herself into their lives and interests. With a child she became "as a child." A small boy, the brother of one of her children, chanced to have the same birthday as her own. She used to call him her "twin," and wrote him a birthday letter for many years after he had arrived at man's estate. One year, while still a child, he sent her a birthday present of some little plush monkeys, and in her letter of thanks she wrote :

"They are such nice, loyal apes, all clutching the flag of England, that I have given them six names (his sisters'). You need not tell your sisters if you think it will make them angry !—Your affectionate old twin,
"ALICE OTTLEY."

She had a very warm corner in her heart for her kindergarten boys, and followed their careers with interest, as they grew up and moved out into the world. Great was her pleasure when, in 1908, one of her "Old Boys" was elected a member of her Council.

Her selfless spending of herself on others was shown in her generous, thoughtful hospitality. A little spare room at the High School was always ready for any Old Girl who liked to invite herself, and her visitors lived in the "lap of luxury." Every possible need was forestalled, both in the dining-room and in the bedroom,—a great contrast to her utter disregard of all creature comforts for herself ; if alone, she would probably have the scantiest meal sent in upon a tray. She liked, if possible, to arrange flowers for her visitors' bedroom with her own hands, and to meet them herself at the railway station. Old Girls have been abashed to find their quondam Head-mistress even bringing in their cup of early tea.

The same thoughtful care was bestowed on her

servants, for whose spiritual welfare she planned, as well as for their bodily needs. One of the last drives she took in Worcester was to buy a special “ food ” for her gardener, who had had a break-down in health, and was forbidden to eat meat.

Every member of the Society of the Holy Name, with whom she came in contact, was made to feel that the Superior was ready to befriend her in all possible ways ; her help and counsel were at the disposal of all who wished for it at the yearly Retreats, and at all other times. If unable to come into visible touch with a new member, she wrote her such a letter as the following, (which is dated 1911) :

“ I must write a word of welcome into the Society of the Holy Name ; I trust it may be a real help to you in your life and work, as it has been to very many, I believe, from the sense of fellowship, and the strength of our mutual intercession, especially as education becomes more and more secularised ; and we want to do something to maintain our realisation that it is not a mere ‘ learned profession,’ but a holy vocation.”

Her thoughtful kindness is shown in her answer to a letter from a member of the Society, regretfully declining her invitation to a Retreat :

“ Will you forgive,” she said, “ my asking whether it is the increased expense of the Retreat which has made you feel you must give it up ? If so, please let me have the very great pleasure of having you there instead of one of my own sisters, for whom I should certainly have paid, had she been able to come. Write just a word on the enclosed post-card to say ‘ coming.’ It will be a real joy to me.”

On August 8, 1911, she wrote to a member who was on her staff at Worcester :

“ I have been thinking much of all my dear S.H.N.

members this morning, for we had a celebration at 8, which we took as for the Holy Name ;¹ and need I say that each one on the staff was very specially 'held up on hands of prayer.' "

Of her work for the whole Society, "it is impossible," wrote a member after her death, "to speak with any approach to full knowledge, for which of us can gauge the blessings she won for it through her faithful persevering use of its special intercessions, the Lord's Prayer, the *Veni Creator*, and the Collect for Whitsunday? Yet nothing is more certain to some of us than that those prayers of hers have been one of the greatest helps in our lives: we have actually felt in difficult circumstances and far-off lands their upholding strength and the inrush of their inspiring impulse."

II

Many have cause to be grateful for the high view of friendship set before them in her Communicants' Class, and at other times. No words were strong enough to express her condemnation of the morbid kind of sentimental affection, not worthy of the name of friendship, which tends to sap the spiritual life and lower the spiritual standard, and leads to selfish neglect of home and duty, to a craving for admiration, and to jealousy.

Her definition of friendship was, "the inclination to each other of two hearts, both working for each other's *highest good*." And this, she taught, means a spirit of self-sacrifice, which braces and uplifts, each desiring for the other, not freedom from trial, but rather the courage to face it. A true friend will rejoice as she sees her

¹ August 7, Feast of the Name of Jesus, is one of the special days observed by the Society.

friend's character being moulded and purified through suffering and sorrow.

Writing to one of her “ children ” on this subject, she said :

“ Surely God Himself has given you the priceless treasure of H——'s love, and you cannot, if you would, refuse His gift ; nay, more, He has given you the joy of being a joy to her, and has given her your love. For all this you can thank Him and love Him the more.

“ I believe in no religion which would staunch the pure springs of true human love ; on the contrary, I think the lower love is intended to help us to the higher, and comes from it ; just as all the forms of heat on earth have their original source in the sun. So do not try to love H—— less (you would not succeed !), only try to love God more ; say often the Collect for the sixth Sunday after Trinity. . . . Then, when the time comes that you must leave her dear bodily presence, you will be able to realise that you are never so near to her as when you and she are nearest to Him.”

She advocated the practice of a due reserve in friendship. In particular, there should be restraint in the use of terms of endearment. There should be reserve in talking of holy things ; the most sacred experiences of life should not be spoken of, except in order to give help to another. Reserve should be exercised in talking of other people, especially of their faults. On the other hand, there should be no selfish reserve, no keeping back things which would help or give pleasure to others, or which duty demands that they should know.

And the secret of her own capacity for love and loving-kindness, whether in the case of passing acquaintances, or of her more intimate friends, was of course the same as the secret of all her power—“ For their sakes I sanctify myself ” ; her self-consecration shone

out through all her relationship with others. Many have felt this. An Old Girl writes :

“ One went back and peeped into her dining-room. Perhaps she had only two minutes to give in a busy morning, yet those two minutes were given heartily, wholly ; there was no one else in the world for her while they lasted but oneself—and our Lord. You always found her sweet with the fragrance of prayer, you were never with her but you felt the presence of God. Her whole life was a witness to the reality of the unseen.”

III

Her letters which follow speak for themselves.

To one of her Hampstead Old Girls, from the Beauchamp Almshouses, Newland, Malvern, where she spent her summer holiday in 1882 :

“ I am indeed sorry for you in *your* banishment, while I am so intensely enjoying mine, in this lovely little paradise ; I came to take the work of one of the St. Peter's Sisters, while she has her rest, and we are such a happy, tiny Community, only Sister G——, one dear little lay sister, who does everything for us, and myself ; perhaps you know Newland, for I fancy you have been at Malvern ; if so, you can imagine what a lovely, peaceful life it is. We look after the thirty-two dear old people—almost all over eighty—and take care of the exquisite little church, where there is daily Celebration, Matins, and Evensong ; and for the Offices, we use the sick-room, which has a little embrased window into the west end of the church, so that we look straight to the altar, which has the most beautiful reredos I ever saw ; and of course one grows to love it more and more by living so much in it. The days are quite full—for several of the old people are so infirm that we make their beds and wash them ; and some are ill and want real nursing. Not a sound of the great world reaches us—

I don't think Sister knew of the war in Egypt till I came,—and we have very little talking-time ; but one learns more in a branch house than at St. Peter's, because one does a little of everything, and Sister G—— is so delightful to work under, so utterly gentle and always the same, sweet and bright and calm, and a splendid nurse."

The old people in the almshouses remembered her with great affection in after years, and delighted in the visits which she paid them from time to time from Worcester.

To one of her children, on the arrival of a baby-brother, whose birthday coincided with her own :

(1884.)

" I am delighted at your good news ; how nice of the dear little boy to come on a Sunday morning ! And I am very glad it is a boy, for I know how nice it is to have plenty of brothers.

" My best love and warm thanks to you all four, for the exquisite bouquet—too good for such an old woman ! Don't you know when people are as old as I am they don't have birthdays ? So we will keep to-day next year in your small brother's honour ; dear laddie, when he is as old as I am, may he have as many, and as dear and as kind friends, as I have, for truly it is the best earthly gift Our Father sends us. I suppose I shall have you all to dinner to-morrow, and then you can tell me what the baby is like, and do tell your father I hope he will use this house in any way ; let all the children come to dinner and to tea also, if it would keep yours quieter. I should be delighted."

To the same, on the death of her father (a member of the Council of the School) :

(August 1, 1901.)

" I felt all yesterday afternoon how it was ; indeed, ever since I saw your dear father on that hot Thursday

afternoon, I have been very anxious about him : my oldest, best, truest friend in Worcester ; and to you the dearest, kindest, most loving of fathers.

" Let us thank God that he has been so gently called to his rest, and as he would have wished, with all his dearest ones round him.

" But I know only too well how empty and purposeless life looks, when the very centre of the dear home is gone ; and there are times when one can only just accept the bitter cup, because it is put into our hands by a loving Father, and for His sake drink it. But I do know also how wonderfully He comes near, and helps us to feel that He is so verily and truly the Father of the fatherless, that He pitieth His children.

" Your own best comfort . . . will be, in being a stay and comfort to your dear mother and to the others. You will have so much to do and think of in these next sad days, you must not think of writing ; I am asking N——¹ to tell me when and where you lay him to rest."

To one of her children, on the use of sorrow :

" Your letter made me sad, dear, because I feel that you are making sorrow more sorrowful than it should be. You know I have drunk very deeply of the bitter chalice of bereavement ; God took from me, one by one, my father, the four sisters and brothers nearest to me in age, the little sister who was specially my own, the happy home which was endeared by all tender memories, and very many of my nearest and dearest friends ; and at first it seemed strange and terrible, but I am sure the one lesson He means us to learn in all, is to love Him more and more ; to love all others only in Him, so that when He takes them to Himself, they are not farther off, but only safer ; and, above all, I think He would have us learn with perfect trust to accept His Will for us ; to seek only to know what that Will is, to desire only to do it just as He wills. I verily thought that the care and training of my darling little sister was my

¹ Her "twin." See p. 158.

work in life : He took her, and gave me other children to train for Him. I shrank specially from girls, and detested school-work : He has shown me that my life is to be spent with and for girls, and in school-work ; and I love both dearly. So it will be for us all ; don't question with yourself whether you are able to do things ; if He gives them you to do He will make you able ; but first of all, we must put self wholly aside—think wholly of others—try heartily to gladden every life that touches ours, and then in His Light we shall see light.

“ It is not too much (is it ?) that He asks, when He Himself was the Man of Sorrows, draining to the dregs the cup He would have us taste with Him ; drawing nearest to us when our cross seems sharpest, and then, in His wonderful Love, accepting all we do for others as done to Him.”

To a former member of her staff, on the death of her father :

(1903.)

“ I have just seen in the paper that the great sorrow has come to you, the shadow of which has been drawing on for so long ; and I know only too well all it means to you ; the blank never to be filled until the whole great Family of God is gathered at last where each will find all, and have them for evermore.

“ I hope you were all able to be at home, to help and comfort each other, but I suppose your work must be just about to begin ; and however hard the task may be, there is real mercy in having to do it ; and in the wonderful reality of the Fatherhood, which the fatherless, more than any others, feel guiding and overshadowing their lives. Do not think of writing.”

To an “ Old Boy,” after an accident which necessitated the loss of an arm :

(1892.)

“ . . . You poor, dear old fellow ; when I first heard about it, I longed that it might have been my old arm

instead of your young one ; but then you would never have had the chance of being the noble fellow you will become by conquering circumstances, with God's help, as Mr. (Henry) Fawcett did in a still greater calamity."

To a mother on her daughter's engagement to be married :

(1893.)

" I do indeed from my heart rejoice in what, I am sure, is a very great, though a very unselfish happiness to you ; but looking forward, as we older folk must, to leaving these dear young things some day, it is a restful comfort to know that strong arms of love will be round them ; and indeed I know from experience what a good brother-in-law is to all his wife's family ; tell R—— she need not fear that she will lose her sister, for it is not so a bit ; she will only gain a brother.

" Dear M——'s nature is just one that will expand and develop in this new happiness like a lily in sunshine. I must put in a little note to her."

The note enclosed :

" MY DEAR CHILD,—I cannot close my letter to your mother without a word of love to yourself, for your great happiness makes me more glad than I can say ; if one had ever dared to pray for any definite future for a child one loved, this is what I should have asked for my M—— ; such love from such a man is perhaps the best of earthly gifts ; and coming just before Lent, is good, I think, for it is always humbling, and it will just help to make it quiet and safe ; for you will realise the responsibility of the trust committed to you, and pray for the special graces you will need in the new life before you. Great joy, as well as great sorrow, makes one turn to Him Who sends both to bring us nearer to Himself ; and certainly all pure love is a revelation, as well as a reflection, of His Love.—In glad and loving sympathy,

"Your very affectionate

"ALICE OTTLEY."

To an Old Girl, on her engagement to be married :

(*Christmas Eve, 1896.*)

“Your news makes me very happy ; it is indeed a wonderful and beautiful Christmas gift ;—the most beautiful of all earthly gifts—the most humbling and yet ennobling ; and I know you just accept it thus, and in your Christmas Eucharist will offer it to be sanctified and dedicated.

“I am proud and pleased that one of my dear children should become a link with the school with which I have always felt more closely in sympathy than with any other ; and besides, I know Mr. T—— himself, and have no fear for your happiness in his hands.”

And to another who was to marry a clergyman she wrote :

(1908.)

“... With all my heart I pray that God will enrich you with all gifts needful to enable you to respond to the high vocation of being the wife of a priest in His Church. I know you will feel all the responsibility that goes with the joy, and long to be, what you cannot be in your own strength—a helpmate in the highest sense.”

The Sixth Form of 1897, on leaving the school, presented it with a copy of the picture of “Sir Galahad,” by Watts, and received Miss Ottley’s thanks as follows :

“MY DEAR ‘OLD VITH,’—Your picture has come, and is quite beautiful ; in the name of all the future VITHs who shall, in turn, inherit it, I thank you all, and trust that as generation after generation live and work with that before their eyes, it may help to keep in their minds the thought of the higher life to which each is called ; and the hope which is for each one of us, as for Sir Galahad :

‘Hence I go, and one will crown me king,
Far in the spiritual city.’

Henceforth, 'Sir Galahad' will be the name of the Vith Form room,¹ and I thank you for a thought so wholly in accord with my ideal.—Ever, dear children,

"Your very affectionate

"ALICE OTTLEY."

A letter of thanks for a book given her by seven of her Old Girls, three of whom were among the "First Brood":

(*Easter Day, 1898.*)

"MY VERY DEAR 'SEVEN,'—The 'seven,' who, in succession, have been associated with all the stages and developments of our beloved school, and have ever helped to maintain the ideal which was before us in June 1883, and which, amid much of failure and many mistakes, has remained with us throughout; it is you, and such as you, who alone have made, or can make possible, the realisation of that ideal in the future.

"I have no words to express the surprise and pleasure it was this morning to receive your beautiful book, or adequately to thank you for this loving thought. If ever God has given me the message to deliver to any of you, (as I know well He can and does use the most worthless instruments), you will realise that it has never been anything of my own; and I am sure you will ask that I may not be of those who are 'cold while they kindle others' love;' for indeed none needs your prayers more than your 'quondam' Head-mistress and always loving friend,

ALICE OTTLEY."

To the school, at the time of the Boer war:

(*Lent, 1900.*)

"MY DEAR CHILDREN,—By the time this reaches you Easter will be near, and I think we must all feel that

¹ Many of the rooms at the High School were named after heroes, or benefactors of the school. Among the first to be so named was the "Arthur" room, in which hangs a picture of the noble figure of King Arthur, taken from Maximilian's tomb at Innsbrück.

the ‘Queen of Festivals’ has a special significance for us this year ; for there are few indeed to whom the last six months have not brought sorrow, either in the loss of their own dear ones, or in the heartache of seeing the grief of those they love, and of feeling themselves powerless to comfort. And even if the shadow of death has not passed over our own personal lives, dimming all their brightness, yet we are English, and cannot but ‘grieve with the common grief of all the realm’ over the noble young lives, laid down so valiantly for Queen and country in Africa. And so that great mystery—the presence in God’s beautiful world of sorrow and suffering—is forced upon us ; and if we cannot wholly solve it, at least we must face it, and can best do so, I think, when the light of Easter Morning breaks upon it—Easter following on Good Friday. I suppose to many of us the question comes in the form—‘How can an All-loving God, Who is also Almighty, permit all this misery?’ We almost shudder at ourselves for letting the thought come ; and yet it clamours, in our darker moments, for an answer. Where shall we find one ? First, we must not expect to answer it fully. How should we, with our purblind outlook on one tiny corner of earthly life, judge the acts of Him Who ruleth Eternity and Infinity, the myriads of universes and the heaven of heavens ?

“What if the lives which seem to us so cruelly cut short here, are wanted in some far larger sphere of yet nobler activity in the great ‘Beyond’ ?

“Do we not say ‘*Mors janua vitæ* ?’ And by so doing, do we not admit that the true life lies beyond that gate ? If only we had the realising faith to balance our little sojourn of a few short years of time, against the unmeasured depths of a timeless Eternity, we should, as S. Paul says, ‘faint not’ . . . ‘For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.’¹ So that there is some real connexion between the sorrows and sufferings here, and the glory hereafter.

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 17.

"This brings another thought—Are pain and grief in themselves the greatest evils? or even essentially evils at all? Surely not; even heathen philosophy could get so far as to see that; and how infinitely clearer a light the Incarnation has thrown upon it! It would seem that there are no other means for producing the highest good, the perfection of character; for He, the sinless One, the 'Captain of our Salvation,' was made 'perfect through suffering.'

"Here we touch the true, the only strong, comfort that can help us, when the flood of desolation sweeps over us. Those, and perhaps only those, who have passed through deep sorrow, know how tender is the loving-kindness which sweetens the bitter cup, and enables them to drink it; and how He, Who is the Man of sorrows, draws very near as He opens the Gate of Paradise for one and another of our dear ones to pass through, and lets us feel how close that true Home is, and gives something of His own peace; that peace with which He entered upon the extremity of suffering in Soul and Body, and which He bestowed, as His farewell gift, upon His loved ones in their sorrow.

"So far as my experience goes, it is not those who have suffered and sorrowed most, who are tempted to doubt the love that holds the cup of pain to their lips; rather it is the onlookers, who see the dark cloud, but not the tender light that shines on those within it, the special individual Love, and Fatherly Pity, which we may be sure has been with each separate soul of the thousands that He has taken to Himself in the tumult of battle, or the weariness of sickness, during these terrible months; for 'the LORD is loving unto *every man*.'¹ So we may trust our dear ones to His keeping until the great Easter Day when 'HE will give them to us again with joy and gladness for ever,'² and in the meantime we bless His Holy Name that HE has taught us to believe in 'the Communion of Saints,' in our absolute oneness with each and with all of those happy ones who rest in peace, through Him Who has

¹ Ps. cxlv. 9, P.V.

² Baruch iv. 23.

'overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life.'

"May this Easter be, to you all, bright with this truest joy.—Ever your affectionate ALICE OTTLEY."

To a friend, on the same subject :

(September 2, 1900.)

"It has indeed been a year of sorrow and anxiety in every home, as well as of trouble in the nations ; but how wondrously one sees that 'the Lord sitteth above the waterfloods,' and worketh out His Holy Will for the Church and the world. Does it not look as though the agony in China ¹ may be the means of bringing about a kindlier relation between the nations of Christendom, as the trouble in Africa has elicited the splendid love-loyalty of the Colonies ? It is only when the details of the broken hearts and desolated homes dim our sight with tears, that we cannot see the eternal Purpose being fulfilled through all the stress and the suffering."

To a former member of her staff, on the death of an aunt who was an old friend of her own :

(1901.)

"How good of you to write, dear M——, in the midst of such sorrow, for indeed I know what a tremendous loss this is to you all, as indeed it is to the whole of Richmond ; for there never was anyone more universally loved and loving than your dear sweet aunt ; she was very like my dear sister Sallie, her great friend : both were so like St. John, the loving Apostle, they simply lived out the ideal of 1 Cor. xiii. ; every word of it was true of them ; in all the fifty years I have known and loved her, I never heard her say an unloving word of any human being ; and yet, with all her gentleness, there was so much strength ; the world is poorer for us all now she is gone to the bright Home of Love beyond.

"I shall think very much of you all at Barton to-

¹ The Boxer troubles.

morrow. I am glad I know the very spot in the little churchyard.

"May God comfort you with the realisation of the joy of the blessed Paradise where so many have met now!"

To a friend, on the death of her sister's fiancé:

"My very heart aches for your poor M——; it is hard not to ask why? 'Why must this beautiful life, on which another seemed to hang, be taken out of sight?' And there comes no answer but 'He knoweth,'—He Who loves both, with the perfect strong love, which must do what is truly best for both; and we can only, in the dark, and with eyes blinded by the tears of aching sympathy, cry to Him to comfort, to heal the broken heart, and to send the light of His Love into the shadowed life. She does know that such a love as hers reaches on into the 'eternal leisure of calm love,' where he is waiting for her, but I know how terribly long the waiting time must seem, looking forward to it:—looking *back*, in the ecstasy of joy when they meet again, I suppose it will seem a 'little moment.'

"How he must be praying for her now, in the near Presence, where his will is one with the Father's. Yes, the peace must come, and his love, unseen but felt, will overshadow her, till God's Love set her at his side again!"

Three letters to an Old Girl, the eldest of a family, whose father had died some years previously, on hearing, first of the illness, and later of the death, of her mother, who was also a great friend of her own:

(Aug. 10, 1906.)

"Indeed I am thankful you told me. We have a dear little church here, and shall all think specially of your beloved mother on Sunday at the 8 o'clock Celebration . . . and, needless to say, very constantly all day. Her splendid calm strength will be greatly in her

favour ; and surely we, more than most, perhaps, know by experience the marvellous power of prayer.”

(Aug. 28.)

“ Your letter has only just reached me, dearest child, and confirmed my gravest fears. If it is still possible, you will give your sweet mother my great love ; she knows I think of her and of you all, constantly, before the altar, and in prayer at all times ; and I know that for every day, with all it brings, the tender love of the All-pitying Father will give the strength and the comfort to each one of you, that each will need ; she will not fear to leave you in those loving Hands, which have upheld her and guided her wondrously through all the difficulties of these years ; and you will be able to share the ‘ joy ’ she will ‘ enter into,’ and to go on with the work for the others that she has done thus far so bravely. I have looked up to her and loved her as a sister ; and if ever, in any way, I can do anything for any of you, I am sure you will let me, for her dear sake.”

(Aug. 31.)

“ I feel no words are wanted, for the All-loving Father Himself is teaching and leading you through this time of sorrow, and will hold you lovingly and guide you step by step till He takes you Home.

“ Indeed I shall be with you (in spirit) at M—— tomorrow and at the altar on Sunday ; and how near we all shall be to those who are just beyond the veil together, and surely, even in that near Presence, thinking much of their beloved children, not anxiously, but prayerfully !

“ Your sweet mother has so wholly shared with you her hopes and aspirations for each, that your way is wonderfully clear. I shall never forget that long Sunday talk I had with her last time I was in Oxford, when she was full of thankfulness that the way seemed cleared at last for M——.¹

“ What a very great mercy it is, that all this has come in the holidays, so that you are together for a little

¹ Another member of the family.

while yet ; but I know there must come times when the blank and the loss will seem almost overwhelming, and when you will want all your faith and love and courage to be able to say, ' It is well, for it is *His* holy Will, Who knows all.'

" Do not think of writing ; only you each know you have a very warm place in my heart, for her dear sake as well as your own ; and as each comes before my mind . . . I can only lift each in hands of loving prayer before the Father, Who loves you better than we can imagine. May the consciousness of that individual care and love never fail you ! "

To an Old Boy, on the birth of his little daughter :

" I must write a word of affectionate congratulation on the good news I see in the Worcester paper, and please let me have a word to say that both the mother and the little daughter are going as well as heart can desire. . . . When your wife is well enough to have outside messages, tell her how delighted I am that this precious gift has been sent to her and you."

Her two letters which follow, bear witness in a special way to her love for little children.

To a friend, on the death of a little niece (also her godchild), the daughter of Mrs. Fitzroy Sewell :

(1880.)

" Thank you for your kind little note ; it was hard to give up our sweet darling little ' Alice Irene ' ; but I do feel how selfish and wicked it is to long for her back, when all my prayers for my precious little godchild are more than answered, and she is safe and pure for ever in the dear Arms in which we laid her at her baptism ; it would have been almost harder, I think, to have seen her go away to Africa with all the possibility of her learning evil, and losing her sweet Baptismal whiteness, than it has been to give back the precious gift unsullied

to the Giver now ; still one cannot *always* feel this, and it gives one a great heart-hunger still to see anyone with a baby.”

To a former member of her staff :

“ I cannot say how my very heart aches for you, in this great and unlooked-for sorrow ; I think it is harder to lose these bright young lives from our sight than perhaps any others ; it seems so unnatural for death to come to them ; even now, looking back through a life full of sorrows, the two little ones I lost, a sister of four, and a niece-godchild younger still, stand out as fresh as ever ; and I remember the only thing that comforted me then, was to feel that they were something exceeding precious, to give to One Who asked a sacrifice of which He alone knew the cost ; our very hearts’ darlings given in faith and trust, to be kept so pure and fresh and all unstained, for us to find, when, way-worn and weary, we go to them ; and at least one can be glad that those dear little hearts will never know this bitter pain, nor their eyes shed such burning tears ; glad for ever, with the bright gladness which life here must have taken away ; they must be the darlings of the Angels !

“ God comfort you and help you, dear, when the great waves of grief seem overwhelming. It must be hard to go back to work when you have been in the hush of the very portals of Paradise.”

To an Old Girl, a missionary in Japan :

(Christmas, 1910.)

“ How very sweet your little K.G. babies must be. It is just the same all the world over ; now that I have K.G. students teaching in many countries and many languages, I hear from everywhere the same story, and I am sure it is true. Probably you are reaching the mothers through the children better than you could in any other way.

“ The same post that brought your letter brought me

others from India, Ceylon, China, Syria, New Zealand, Africa, Canada, and the wide ocean. It was very delightful so to clasp hands of love."

To a Hampstead Old Girl, fretting at the rubs and difficulties of daily life :

(1878.)

" I dare say I should fret much more than you do when things look troublous all round ; it is so hard to realise at the moment that ' this wearing, weary trouble is just *the* little bit of the dear Master's Cross, that, in His Love, He bids me carry to test my love to Him ' ; —when one can see *that*, it is all bright with the glow of His own Presence ; try to turn and look straight up in His Face, and life will fret you less. . . . The nearness of the Crucified be your comfort and strength ever ! "

To a Worcester Old Girl, in similar difficulties :

" I am pressed above measure, and shall, I know, not have time for a ' letter,' but I am going, instead, to send you, as soon as I can get it, a book which was an era in my young life, and which I had not read again until it was given me this year, after I had been reading the life of S. François de Sales in the neighbourhood in which he had lived and worked. It is a selection of his spiritual letters ; and as I read of your difficulties, I felt how exactly he would meet most of them. So, if the book arrives, you will know whence it comes, and read only a little each day, as I am doing now ; but get hold of his life also, if you can ; he lifts one into the right atmosphere. . . .

" My dearest child, I know exactly what you are feeling ; and all one can say is, trust the loving Father to give you what is truly best. One can but just *pray* this, and know that He knows what you cannot even express, and then wrap up all your will in His."

To the same :

" I am more glad than I can say that you have written so fully ; I think I understand exactly how things are

with you ; and also I believe that most, if not all of us, have at some time passed through these great difficulties ; nay, I fear we can never be free from them while we are ' militant here in earth.'

"As to how to meet them, I feel presumptuous in trying to advise, and in doing so, please believe that I write from experience of my own miserable failure, which would sometimes have been despair but for one certainty : ' This is the *will of God*, even *your* sanctification.' If only our poor, weak will can hold on to His Almighty will, nothing can pluck us out of His hand.

"As to special points—do not trouble about the letter of the Guild Rules ; you are not bound by them as an Associate, and it is the *spirit* of accepting and following the will of God, shown you in the circumstances of your life, that alone matters ; and here there come definite duties—the getting up early enough to be down in plenty of time for family prayers, I do think pre-eminently important, as a first act of sacrifice each day, bracing you up for all that it may bring ; and I think you may make it easier by just offering it to our Lord, ' For Thy sake, Lord Jesus, I rise to do Thy will to-day.' Clearly, this Lenten-tide, His voice has come to call you back into closer union with Him again, and His hand is holding yours, even when you cannot feel it. I am sure your friend was right about holding to faith, but I should add, to love ; though you do not at the moment *feel* any love, do little things, such as Sunday-school teaching, or dull visits, gilding them with the thought, ' I love Thee, and would do this for Thee.' But one thing you cannot live without, is your Communion ; it is difficult to go, feeling cold and hard, but it is the sick soul refusing to go to the Physician, if you do not.

"Sometimes we can only obey, and our obedience is accepted, and the light comes.

" . . . I shall pray much daily for you ;—and you will stir up the gift of your Confirmation, by definite prayer to the Holy Spirit, for the counsel and the ghostly strength you need."

In answer to a request for prayer, from a member of the Society of the Holy Name who was about to give up her school :

" May 21, Whit Tuesday (1889).

" Thank you, dear friend, for writing to me ; indeed we will think of you : I am quite sure that the promise in Sunday's lesson will not fail for you, and that you will hear ' the voice behind you saying, This is the way,' when the moment for taking a step forward really comes ; meantime, the wrench of parting from your children, and of leaving the home you love, will be a very sad one, but I think one feels now, that this, which comes more or less to us all, may be a gentle loosening of the roots that hold us to earth, that so we may be more ready for the great transplanting. . . ."

To the same in illness, on March 8 (1908) :

" I am grieved to hear of your serious illness : all the branches of the S.H.N. shall be told to-morrow, and their prayers and thanksgivings asked for in your own words, and I trust it may please God to raise you up again, but of course progress must be slow ; will your dear sister let us know from time to time how you are ? "

Again, on April 17 :

" Just a word of love for Easter. I shall think of you with special thanksgiving that morning."

And on June 5 :

" Thank you much, my dear Miss —, for writing and telling me just what I wanted to know before to-morrow. I am indeed thankful that you have the great comfort of Mr. A—— near you to bring you the best comfort and help. It has been a long trial, but, as always, you have had abundant proof of the Father's

love and care throughout, and I know it has been a real happiness to your sister, that she could be with you, and has had just the skill and power needed.

"I shall think specially of you at to-morrow's Celebration amongst the S.H.N. members, with thanksgiving as well as prayer."

To the same :

"Yes, indeed, one feels more and more how much fuller and richer the life beyond is than this, whence so many of the best and dearest have passed away; the ever-growing loneliness here makes one turn to the perfect companionship there."

A birthday letter to an Old Girl before going for the first time to St. Hugh's College, Oxford :

"From my heart I wish for you God's special blessing on this year, which, if so He wills, will be a new era, a very real turning-point in life for you, bringing fresh experiences, very delightful in many respects, but with special dangers also, to test the principles that as yet have had few obstacles to meet; but I do not fear for you; you will go forth in a strength not your own,—perfected in conscious weakness, and omnipotent to keep you from falling."

To an Old Girl, a teacher, on recovery from a very serious illness :

(Oct. 27, 1902.)

"My heart stood still with joy and gratitude when I saw your handwriting; and truly I believe this is the direct answer to very many prayers. I have always had a great hope that you might fully recover, . . . and some day, looking back to this time, you will see that God had His own loving purposes in taking you aside for a while into the shadow and the quiet, which, in our life especially, is often so wholly lacking. The interests

of each day are so absorbing and so close at hand, that we need to be withdrawn from them for a time to restore the balance. I am so very glad to know to-day, so that the Celebration to-morrow morning will be a real Eucharist of gratitude."

To an Old Girl, on taking up a new piece of work :

(1901.)

"I know how overwhelmingly the sense of 'I can't' comes over one in beginning any new work, and yours is a specially difficult one, but this very feeling of our own utter incapacity throws us back upon the One, Who can use the poorest instruments, if so He will, to do His work.

"Day by day to stir up the gift that is in us in virtue of our Confirmation, the very gift we need, of counsel and ghostly strength, of wisdom and understanding, makes the impossible, possible."

To an Old Girl, on becoming a Head-mistress :

(1901.)

". . . In the meantime, remember the Father, Who always meant this for you, and you for this, has been preparing you by every step of your life for the work He will do by you. You can only keep your hand in His, and let Him lead you as He will: 'It shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak,' is such a blessed certainty, when there is no chance of preparing. 'I believe in the Holy Ghost.'"

The next three letters were written to an Old Girl, who, after feeling her way towards the Religious Life as her vocation, tested it, and was obliged on the score of health to relinquish her hope :

(August, 1909.)

"If the call to the Religious Life is a real one, the way will certainly be cleared, and the definite guidance given,

before you have to take the step ; and, moreover, we need never fear that if we are called to any work, the Master will not supply all the power needed to respond to the vocation, and to fulfil it. . . . Whatever the future may bring, I think the first object is to cure the eczema, and to that we must bend our thoughts. When the time gets nearer, I believe I can gather all information.”

To the same (when obliged to take a rest on the eve of her novitiate) :

(Jan. 5, 1910.)

“ I know well what this means to you of keen disappointment, but I am sure you realise that at this moment it is just *the* act of sacrifice asked of you : the training in the perfectly yielded will, to which you will have the power given to respond ungrudgingly. . . . ”

To the same (on hearing that she was not allowed to return to the Community) :

(July 1, 1910.)

“ I am grieved for you, for I know well what this means ; for, you know, I went through a similar experience.

“ I think all you can do is to keep an ‘ elastic will,’ and to wait for the guidance which is sure to come. . . . ”

CHAPTER VIII

HOLIDAYS

"All things are yours : and ye are Christ's."

"It is too good not to come true," was a characteristic saying with which Miss Ottley met the timid doubts of one to whom she was unfolding what seemed the almost impossible prospect of accompanying her on one of her delightful holiday tours ; and if it was the expression of a hopefulness that never grew old, it was quite as much the result of a long experience. Nobody, surely, has ever enjoyed holidays with greater zest ; and nobody else could have made them so enchanting for those who shared them with her. One who was oftenest with her in the later years of her life, writes of

"memories of delightful walks among the Swiss mountains, or in the Forest of Dean, when she would tell stories of her childhood, or of the thrilling adventures belonging to the days when she could make real 'ascents,' and of the kindly guides who accompanied her on these expeditions. Then she would plunge suddenly into some deep theological topic, or teach us about flowers, birds, or stars—all with the same eager interest, and always with the same hopeful assumption that we knew as much as, or more, than she did."

Another recalls

"her gay and vivid enjoyment of life on a holiday, either at home, or, better still, among the Swiss mountains. She invariably did far more than she ought

to have done, but she lived out every minute to the full."

She loved planning beforehand, undertaking all the arrangements, and seeing to all details, including the clothes to be worn : and her beloved little soft felt hat, the bright blue gauze veil for glacier walks, the nailed mountain boots, green botany tin, and broad belt with its handy straps for carrying things, came out year after year. Her activity and endurance were amazing. She tired out much younger folk. One of these writes :

" She always walked a little ahead of us ; we sometimes had hard work to keep up with her, and often we came upon her kneeling by the path, digging away vigorously with her trowel (which she would carry everywhere), ' to get the root leaves ' of some treasure she had spied. We were always trying to find some plant she did not know, but it was very seldom she was at a loss for its name. She used to teach me the names of the ferns too ; I remember sitting in the woods above Argentières, and finding seven different kinds within reach of the boulder on which we were sitting."

Though she was too well aware of the conditions of mountain climbing, to run the risk that ignorant people often incur, she never seemed to have any sense of fear. Wherever an experienced guide would take her, she would go unhesitatingly. The companion just quoted, in recalling this fearlessness, connects with it a story, which also shows how incidents in her walks were parables to her :

" I remember once walking along a narrow mountain track, which appeared to end abruptly a little way ahead, at the edge of a precipice. She was holding my hand as I stumbled giddily along behind her, till we turned and found ourselves in a safe path. She seemed to enjoy

the spice of danger, and joyously exclaimed : ' It's just like life ; so often you can't see where your path is leading, and just where it seems to end, you turn a corner, and there it goes on clear before you, and the precipice disappears : you just have to hold God's hand, and go on in faith, and the way grows plain."

One of her gifts as a traveller, was her faculty for making friends with all sorts and conditions of people, getting into touch with them in the easiest and most natural fashion. This was partly owing to her command of French, German and Italian. People found she could understand and interpret their difficulties, and they turned to her in stations, hotels, and mountain inns. She won the hearts of hotel-keepers, maid-servants, porters, and, above all, of distracted English people in trouble or illness, and her quick understanding generally led to a solution of their difficulty. She had tales to tell in later years of extraordinary situations in which she had found herself placed, such as the story of a poor peasant woman, who died in her arms,—she alone having been able to understand her patois.

No trouble seemed to be too great for her to take, even for an utter stranger. Once, at a hotel at Cortina, she heard a lady complaining that night after night the plate of strawberries at dessert was emptied before it reached her. Miss Ottley resolved to find some strawberries for this lady, and in searching for them next day, she became separated from her companions, lost her way, and must have made a *détour* of nearly five miles before she regained the hotel. Her friends were getting very anxious, and beginning to talk of a search-party, when, to their great relief, she came in and slipped a basket of strawberries on to the lap of the astonished lady.

It can be easily believed that she was an ideal cicerone

and travelling companion, entering into every sort of interest, never fussing or worrying, full of resource when any unexpected hitch occurred. The clue to it all flashes into view in the words quoted at the head of this chapter, from 1 Cor. iii. (one of the morning lessons during the holiday month of August); and she drew others into the circle of her peace and joy in such moments as the quiet Compline said together in her room at the close of those happy days among the mountains, or the lakes, or the picture galleries.

A few extracts from letters of widely different dates, will show how many and various were the interests which found scope in her holidays abroad. The first is from Pontresina, which kept a strong hold on her affections, and where she returned again and again till at length the place, like so many in Switzerland, was spoilt by over-popularity, and she had to seek less frequented haunts. The letter is interesting, too, from the reference in its close, to one of her own successes in examination :

“ KRONENHOF, PONTRESINA,
August 18, 1878.

“ I have been wanting to write to you ever since we came here, for whom do you think we have found here as chaplain, and the most perfect chaplain that ever was? Mr. Ayre of St. Mark's, Audley Street. I cannot at all express how good and kind he has been to us, and how perfectly delightful and restful our fortnight here has been; we have charming rooms, looking right on to the glorious Rosegg snow-peaks and glaciers, and it is the most delightful place; we are so high already that the excursions are not fatiguing, and the delicious pine-forests, teeming with loveliness, are exhaustless in their walks and lounges: the flowers, too, are exquisite, and the weather has been so lovely that the few wet days have been quite pleasant. We have a delightful

little circle of nice friends in the hotel, and they have met in our room for reading and working and painting, and afternoon tea, till we have half wished for more wet days ; but on fine ones, either the chaplain has planned excursions for us, or he has joined us in the forest, where A—— and M—— were sketching, and we have boiled our ‘ Etnas ’ and made tea there.

“ On Wednesday we are homeward bound, leaving this place with real regret, and a full intention of coming back whenever we may. . . . One’s heart positively aches with thankfulness that cannot be expressed ; and just as one mercy more, the Cambridge List came last week, with the tidings I could hardly believe, that I have a First again in Group D, with a Distinction in Political Economy. I think that this year I shall read nothing fresh, unless it were Physiology, which is a new subject for Cambridge—I find myself doctoring so many people, that I think I ought to take a diploma : I have had five patients in the hotel ; three have recovered perfectly, and the two others are doing well ! ”

And ten years later, she wrote to one of her “ children ” :

“ HÔTEL SARATZ, PONTRESINA,
August 28, 1888.

“ We are taking ‘ a day off ’ to-day, *i.e.* making no long expedition, so I am going, instead, to have the pleasure of writing to you. I have been thinking of you day by day, longing that I could have ‘ my First Brood ’ and some others here. We have had a glorious time, first on the Italian Lakes, and now on the glaciers of the Engadine. . . . Last Friday we made the Diavolezza tour, which even high climbers admit is one of the most beautiful things in Switzerland. We got on to the first glacier at a quarter to seven, walked up that—a steep snow slope—for one and a half hours, and then were at the top of the Col, with the wonderful circle of snow-peaks beneath us, all glistening with the fresh snow that had fallen on Wednesday ; then we came down to the Pers-gletscher, where we had to be roped, and go slowly

for about an hour, to the Insula Pers, a kind of rocky island in the midst of the ice, and then down the Morteratsch glacier : it was an eight hours' walk on the ice, but no one was the least tired, and every step was full of interesting things—the secret wonders of the great ice world. It is curious to see everything working *upwards* through the ice, so that things lost in the deepest crevasses are sure to come to the surface some day. A gentleman and his guide were lost many years ago on one of these glaciers, and by degrees all their bones and little properties have come up and been collected.

“Then the flowers this year are exceptionally lovely. We have found two hundred and seventy different species, and hope for more yet, though it is getting late now, and people are fast leaving Pontresina ; but it is quite the nicest place I know in Switzerland.

“There is a lovely little English church with daily short service at 8, and delightful Sunday services ; and the air is so clean and fresh (for we are more than 6000 feet above the sea), that even the very hot sun never tries one, and life is one long thanksgiving for all the loveliness : in fact, the only thing I want is to have my children here too.”

One, who was with Miss Ottley in Switzerland for the first time a year or two after this, when she was again at Pontresina, vividly remembers the delight of it all, and says :

“What impressed one so much was her keen zest about everything, unspoilt by the faintest touch of excitement or fussiness. The place was very crowded that year, and we had been disappointed about rooms at the Saratz, her favourite hotel ; but she thoroughly contented herself in sharing a rough little room in a *dépendance* of the humbler ‘Steinbock’ over a hay barn, where the sweet smell of the hay came up through the chinks between the boards of the floor, and where we gave select tea-parties, sitting on our boxes and drinking out of her tin cups the tea she made with the aid of

her spirit-lamp. She took me for the same glacier 'tour' which she mentions in the above letter, and we had to go up to a hut in the mountains the night before, so as to make a very early start, and get the most difficult part done before the sun spoilt the surface. Miss Ottley had foreseen and planned for everything: our hot bottles kept us from freezing in bed, and provided us with warm water to wash with, when we tumbled out at 2 A.M.; and her spirit-lamp made the coffee boil for our *very* early breakfast.

"The last part of the way, coming down the Morteratsch glacier, was so easy in comparison with the rest, that we almost flew along, jumping the little crevasses with our alpenstocks, much to the delight of the guide, who had not expected to find this little, fragile-looking lady such a good mountaineer—'Sie laufen wie Gemsbok,' he said with hearty approval."

A different interest attaches to the following passage from a letter written in Switzerland, in August 1899, when she had gone away after a very hard term clouded with family bereavement and perplexities as to where her own duty lay:

"Certainly one could not have a more perfect preparation for whatever is before us, than this time in the mountains, with their solemn stillness and exquisite beauty, expressing such Almighty love and loving Omnipotence, where so truly,

'Undisturbed by sin and earth, the soul
Owns His entire control.'

It seems to restore the balance between the little passingness of our short sojourning on earth, and the timeless eternity of the Beyond; and the combined awfulness and tenderness of the works of God should—*do*, I think,—fill one with restful trust in His care. The word 'loving-kindness' so exactly expresses what one feels overshadowing life in the little daily mercies, and

the great blessings, and perhaps most of all in the great sorrows which His love sends us."

A great event in her life was her visit to Italy at the end of 1880 and beginning of 1881, seeing something of Genoa, Pisa, and Siena, before joining her brother Robert in Rome.¹ Her home letters are full of the sights she was enjoying. Of a picture at Siena she says :

" One of Sodoma's, of our Lord bound to the pillar, is the most wonderful picture I ever saw ; it is in a small room almost alone, and is a perfect Presence ; one goes back to it irresistibly, and it speaks : some day I *must* go back to Siena, and my dream is to take A—— there, if only to see that one face again ; but oh ! to have A—— in these galleries, where you may just sit and paint all day, none noticing or coming near you ! "

From Rome she writes :

" Sunday, St. Stephen's Day (1880).

" It was very curious being here for Christmas ; we met the Warden ² and Mrs. Talbot after church. In the afternoon, we went to Sta. Maria Maggiore—a glorious basilica decorated for Christmas, by covering all the marble columns with dirty red damask, striped with yellow braid ! but the illumination, by thousands of candles, was very fine, and the sight most curious : first a procession of Canons with a Bishop and a Cardinal, who disappeared into the apse for Vespers ; lovely music again, and meantime the nave got fuller and fuller with a motley throng,—nearly all the English and Americans in Rome, I should think ; and then groups of gaily-dressed Contadini, files of nuns with orphans, and religious orders without end ; each group walked up first to the high altar, and knelt there to adore the relics of St. Matthias, and a silver bambino with a scrap of the

¹ See Chapter II, p. 27, *note*.

² Of Keble College, now Bishop of Winchester.

true Manger ; then into the Borghese and Sistine chapels for some more relics. All up the nave monks and priests were seated in confessionals, with long wands, with which they touched the heads of anyone who chose to go and kneel down, and then held out their hands to be kissed : this done, everyone walked about and chatted quite at their ease. There was a procession at the end ; all the Canons and Cardinals carrying filthy guttering dip candles, and the Bambino under a canopy ; but it was far from impressive. In fact, there was simply no attempt at real worship or devotion in the actual rites, though I dare say there was a great deal among the poor people, who flopped down in little knots wherever the crowd was thinner, and said prayers at a wonderful rate ; but the whole thing was painful and disenchanting in the extreme."

" *Dec. 31 (1880).*

" It seems ages since I wrote, but you cannot imagine how impossible it is to sit down quietly, especially now that we have got into the rush of society, and everyone has called. First, one evening as I came in, I found a stately ecclesiastic in purple robes and crimson trimmings, asking whether Signora Ottley was not there ; so I walked him up to the 'terzo'—not without some difficulty in getting his portly person so high, but we got on very well ; he was most friendly, and will present us to the Pope next week. Then came old Commendatore D——, 'Cancelliere segreto di numero di spada e cappa di Sua Santita' ; a thin, sad old man ; so broken-hearted at the present state of affairs, that he cared for nothing and nobody.

" Next appeared a little Jesuit Father, Padre C——, who talks English well, and will take us into the Vatican library and show us all its costliest treasures ; and last, not least, came the Cardinal H——. We were out, but R—— returned his call yesterday. But, withal, ecclesiastical Rome is most disenchanting : there are no really grand rites now, and the only pretty one we have seen is the children's preaching in the Ara Cœli

Church : one chapel is fitted up to represent Bethlehem, with drop-scenes of shepherds, &c., and in the front is the sacred Bambino—the most hideous little doll you can imagine, bedecked with jewels, but uglier than a sixpenny doll in a fair.

“ Just opposite this, on the other side of the church, was a little raised platform, and on to this, one little child after another got up, and preached its little sermonette ; they were really recitations, but with such pretty gestures and action, and so sweetly pronounced, that many people were quite overcome by it.

“ To-day we have been to a really beautiful service, which they have in all the parish churches ; a solemn ‘ Te Deum,’ sung by the whole congregation, as a thanksgiving for the mercies of the last year : we went to the Jesuits’ Church, a splendid building filled by a vast crowd, and beautifully illuminated, and it was really glorious,—such a grand body of sound, and the singing so good.

“ We have had no real Roman weather yet, only one sunshiny day, and that was S——’s birthday, which we spent most delightfully in the Palaces of the Cæsars, taking lunch with us, and poking about with R—— until the whole thing was quite real ; there is a house almost perfect, with the paintings on the walls still, and all the rooms, even to the little bedrooms, and the bathroom with its heating arrangements ; it is altogether more interesting than I could have conceived.

“ That afternoon we went to St. John Lateran, the mother church of all Christendom, and extremely interesting : being St. John’s Day, the relics were exposed, and the ‘ faithful ’ were adoring the heads of St. Peter and St. Paul ; then came solemn (?) vespers, which means a promenade concert and fashionable lounge, with some pretty operatic music going on somewhere.

“ It would be endless to write of all the wondrous sculpture ; I am beginning to feel on intimate terms with most of the Emperors, and should know Julius Cæsar, or Augustus, or Marcus Aurelius, or Septimius

Severus, or Hadrian, or Nero, or the human pig, Vitellius, wherever I met them ; and as for the ' dying gladiator,' no description, no photo conveys any idea of it ; neither does it of the ' Beatrice Cenci,' her wonderful, tender, sorrowful eyes, which follow you so pleadingly, and change their expression continually. Antinous too, and the ' Faun,' and the beautiful ' young Augustus,' each is so lovely : some day you must come and see them.

" We are going to an ' At Home ' at the chaplain's on Wednesday : and one day soon shall be presented to ' Sua Santita.'

" Yesterday, we climbed up to the top of St. Peter's, but it was a dull day, and we saw very little.

" I shall never know the way about Rome : all its narrow streets and little piazzas are so alike, and the churches all resemble one another so closely—and are so endlessly numerous, that I am hopelessly puzzled, and when I am on the Capitol, am never sure it is not the Coelian or the Quirinal ; this last will be the ' West end ' of Rome ; the king lives there, and they are building new wide streets, and big hotels."

" Jan. 7, 1881.

" We are still having deplorable weather : to-day it is pouring, and miserably cold, and as for the sun, we have never seen him in Rome, except on S——'s birthday.

" This morning we met Padre C—— at the Vatican at a quarter to nine, and have been the whole morning in the wondrous library with the sub-præfect, the most delightful and cultivated man, a great Eastern linguist, and large hearted with his wide knowledge ; of course he could, and did, show us all that is most precious there ; above all, the Codex Vaticanus, the most ancient existing manuscript of the Bible, written exquisitely, all in uncials, but most easily legible. There are eleven hundred rooms in the Vatican, and the library alone must be miles in length, many rooms full of books and manuscripts being still unarranged ; there is a gallery a quarter of a mile long, the whole walls of

which are covered with inscriptions, beautifully arranged, found in Roman palaces and villas, and in the Catacombs.

"We have been to a delightful little catacomb under the church of St. Agnese fuori le mura; it is small, but almost more interesting than the larger ones, because so little disturbed. Many of the graves have not been opened at all, and in those that have, the skeletons are in wonderful preservation, from the perfect dryness of the volcanic tufa; the passage is only just wide enough and high enough for one person to pass, and the walls, both sides, closely honeycombed with the 'sleeping-places'; sometimes two, sometimes three, in a grave, with the simplest inscriptions—not praises, only peace and joy, with a dove or fish, or a Good Shepherd or a cross, roughly carved, and almost all ending 'in pace.'

"R—— was presented to the Pope yesterday by Cardinal H——; unfortunately Aunt C——¹ did not tell the Cardinal I was here, so I could not go with him, but I suppose Monsigr. C—— will arrange for us at the next reception; the poor old Pope is very shaky and out of health, and works himself to death, they say, looking personally into every detail of Church organisation—he received a thousand pilgrims yesterday, with their Epiphany gift of £1000.

"The 'Epifania' is kept in an annoying way, by a sort of feast of trumpets—all the populace congregate in the 'Piazza Navona,' and every one has a trumpet of some sort, mostly of tin, with which they make the most inconceivable din all night long, beginning at 8 o'clock on the Eve of the Epiphany; and they tell us we shall have this for a week."

Many years later, spending another holiday in Italy in the spring of 1907, she keenly enjoyed sharing some of her old delights with younger friends to whom they

¹ A Roman Catholic aunt who gave them introductions to the "useful" people in Rome.

were quite new, and then going on to pay her own first visit to Assisi :

“ FIRENZE,

March 23, 1907.

“ Your letter came at the rightest moment ; for I am alone ; C—— and M—— went off to S. Croce after breakfast, while G—— and I walked to the station and got the big luggage ; and with no delay or trouble brought it back so quickly that the others are not likely to be in yet. All has gone perfectly, *D.G.* The crossing was as bad as it could be ; but by the time we had passed through the quiet majesty of the snow mountains and through the vines and olives, lemons and oranges, bordering the blue Mediterranean, and above all, when we reached the unspeakable loveliness of Pisa, we ceased to say ‘ never again ! ’ and began to feel it was worth while. The Campo Santo bathed in glorious sunshine, with the spring flowers all over it, and the Cathedral and Baptistery guarding it, is the very ideal of Easter Eve peacefulness. There was a baptism of a dear brown-eyed little ‘ Lauretta ’ in the wonderful font ; but there was no pretence to devotion nor even to reverence in the old priest, who did the business with immense rapidity, smiling and nodding around, and patting the little spectator child on the cheek as he gabbled through the ‘ Credo.’

“ Yesterday we drove to the ‘ Certosa,’ near Pisa, and sad as it was, owing to the deserted magnificence of the monastery, one could not but feel that the Church has brought the confiscation on herself—and that the nation approves it. We missed our proper train to Florence, but got here about 8 o’clock, and are comfortably established in a curious warren of rooms at the top of the house, delightfully close to everything. The weather has been divine : the view from the Tower of Pisa in the sunset glow, with every shimmering shade of blue and purple, from the white-topped mountains to the opalescent plains, dotted with ‘ cities ’ with historic names,—was a dream of beauty.”

And in the May of that same year, after her return to England, she wrote to a friend in Canada :

" We had a wonderful time in Florence ; and afterwards at Assisi, where I had an introduction to M. Paul Sabatier, which trebled the interest of our week there. He has studied St. Francis' life and work for many years, and made him a living person to us, as he pointed out the spots in which every event of his life took place. Moreover, he is the core of the Fogazzaro movement, and is delightfully optimistic as to the future, although Pio X. has put it back by his unwise attempt at suppressing it : he might as well force the hatched bird back into its shell ; for all the earnest young men, lay as well as clerical, are in it, and it grows daily.

" It was wonderful to go then to Ravenna, and find ourselves put back a thousand years, from the fourteenth century to the fourth, in the stately Byzantine mosaics, as bright as the day on which they were put up. Thence we hurried home by Milan and the Simplon, and already it seems long, long ago !

" It was wonderful, coming back from Italy, where all was as brown as in mid-winter, to find England, and especially Worcester, in its lush green, and, all about Pershore and Evesham, the cherry and pear orchards arrayed like a bride for her wedding ; now it is the chestnuts and apples and may-hedges that are all in their glory."

From Argentières in August 1909, she wrote :

" Mont Blanc is shining in all its glory against an Italian blue sky, and not a speck of cloud in all the great expanse.

" We went to the parish church at 9, and there was a curious little preface to the Mass, in a sort of Lammass day service ; big baskets of *pain bénit* were brought round, and everyone took a piece (about a cubic inch) ; it was really a saffron-cake, such as you get in Cornwall. There was an extremely nice sermon from a priest who is here on holiday ; most touching in its faith and

trust that it is only '*momentanément*,' that the curés are torn from their flocks, and the sick and sad and suffering deprived of the help and comfort of the '*bonnes sœurs*'; but he says that already French ladies and peasant women and shop-girls, are accepting this as their opportunity, and are taking their '*diplômes*' for nursing and 'first-aid,' and using their leisure for the ministry that is left for them. And he begged the mothers especially to rise to the absolute necessity that they should supply the Christian element in the education of their children, and keep religion alive 'until this tyranny be overpast.'

"We went afterwards to Matins at the Hôtel Planet, but could not stay for the sermon, as we had to hurry back to midday meal. Now Miss S—— and M—— are making afternoon tea; and afterwards we are going into the wood to read, but shall not toil up again to the Planet."

A few days later another letter shows that the little party had moved up into the Hôtel Planet :

"It is a perfectly glorious morning, and we have just watched seven happy people reaching the summit of Mont Blanc: oh! how I envy them on that dazzling height—'the little round button at top' of all Europe, purest white against speckless blue; but it is like reading the life of a Saint—seeing something unattainable until we have left behind this 'body of humiliation.'"

"We are most thankful to have got rooms, until the 16th, in this delightful hotel, which stands very high up above Argentières, so that we get mountain instead of valley air, and are bathed in sunshine all day long, with countless lovely walks all about. We shall look out for Perseids or other 'tears of St. Lawrence,' after *table d'hôte* on Tuesday and other nights; that will be about 10 o'clock with you; but we are very much shut in by the Aiguilles Rouges on the north, so shall not see so many as you, I hope, will."

In 1910 she was at Oberammergau for the Passion Play, and wrote from Garmisch :

“ We have had a wonderful time here. Of the Passion Play one cannot write or talk : but—save your pennies in the hope that in 1920 you may come. It is terribly crowded, and one is sometimes shocked at what one hears said about it ; but, withal, I believe that to many it is the turning-point in their life : and in this world-worshipping age, is verily God’s sacrament to those who perhaps could only so be brought to faith and love.”

CHAPTER IX

THE CLOSE. 1904-1912

Per ardua ad alta.

THE period after the school's "coming of age" opened sadly for Miss Ottley, owing to the sudden death of two members of her Council, and the withdrawal of one of her most valued colleagues. In December, 1904, Miss Bagnall, after more than eighteen years' splendid work at Worcester, left the school in order to carry its traditions to a distant corner of the Empire. She had accepted a post at Auckland, New Zealand, in the Diocesan High School, which had been founded a few years earlier by Bishop Neligan, under Miss Pulling as Head-mistress. The following autumn, Miss Woodall, who had worked under Miss Ottley for eleven years, and had succeeded Miss Bagnall as second in command, was elected Head-mistress of Milton Mount College, Gravesend. She began her new work in January, 1906.

"As each such loss tests the staying-power of our school," wrote Miss Ottley in *White and Blue*, "we confidently look to old and present girls to uphold us in 'hands of prayer,' and to rally to maintain the honour of their Alma Mater."

For some years already she had been quietly looking forward to the time when she must resign her beloved school into younger hands; now the thought began to take more definite shape. In early days she was fond of saying that she must have the school in such thorough working order, that, supposing she were to die in the

night, everything would go on as usual the next day. Now she aimed at bringing everything to perfection, in order to hand the work on to her successor.

I

In 1905, she was able to carry out a project that had been long in her mind. Throughout the school's history, "student-mistresses" had been trained for teaching in the kindergarten, and had taken the examinations of the National Froebel Union. But as a teaching diploma was becoming more and more a necessity for teachers seeking secondary posts in schools, Miss Ottley was urged by many Head-mistresses to enlarge the training department, and to prepare students for the Cambridge teachers' certificate. In order that the school might be recognised by the Board of Education as a duly qualified training college, Mr. P. A. Barnett came down in November, and inspected the arrangements for training. His visit was inspiring and helpful, and his report generously appreciative. From that time onwards, there were always at the High School three or four students working for the Froebel and Cambridge certificates. Perhaps these students were able in a very special degree to realise the effect on the school of Miss Ottley's ideals and personality. They were privileged to be present at her lessons, they benefited by her stimulating criticism of their teaching (for she would often attend the lessons given by them during the last half of their year of training), and as they watched the life of the school, and were introduced to the principles that lay behind its working, their whole conception of the teaching life underwent an uplifting change. They learned to regard it no longer as a mere profession, but as a vocation to which they had been called by God.

In order that this side of the work should be really serviceable to the Church, a gift was made to the school in 1908, providing for the foundation of a bursary which was intended to enable girls, hoping to serve as teachers in the mission field, to undergo a year's training in the High School. This has given an added stimulus to the children's interest in the work of the Church abroad, an interest which Miss Ottley was greatly anxious to foster and encourage during the last few years of her rule.

In the autumn of 1905, after long thought and not without much regret, she decided that the time had come when the school should cease to work exclusively (on its "foreign missionary" side) for Zanzibar, and should connect itself definitely with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, which includes in its scope evangelistic work in "all the world." Accordingly, a branch of the "King's Messengers" was formed, and, as Maud Etheldreda Kimramsele, the adopted African child, now grown up and happily married, no longer needed support, the children's attention was turned to India, and a little girl under the care of the Delhi Mission was adopted in her stead. "We hope and believe," wrote Miss Ottley, "that this new departure may result in an increased zeal for, and a wider interest in, the spread of Christ's Kingdom."

In July, 1906, she wrote in *White and Blue* to her Old Girls as follows :

"MY DEAR OLD GIRLS, AND ESPECIALLY GUILD MEMBERS,—First, let me thank the many who wrote to me before the Annual Meeting ; their letters were delightfully interesting, and I would fain have answered each severally ; but as this was impossible, in the press of work, I hope they will accept this as intended for each.

"We had a goodly gathering at St. Oswald's on St.



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN 1906

Peter's Day, but inevitably a large majority of you could not be there ; and for the sake of these, I want to tell you what has been growing in my mind for some years, *i.e.* the question whether we, as a Church Guild, have sufficiently realised our duty to mission work.

"Most of us are conscious that, during the last ten years or so, there has been a wonderful stirring of the Spirit of GOD in this direction ; and certainly we have felt it in the school ; a flourishing branch has been founded of ' King's Messengers,' *i.e.* children who are pledged to do what they can to help in the carrying of the message of salvation unto all the world.

"As they grow out of childhood, they will, we hope, pass on to become ' King's Workers,' with the same threefold pledges as before ;—to pray for missions, read about them, and do whatever lies in their power to help them.

"It is this branch of the S.P.G. that I would specially commend to you, as a practical means of showing us *how* to do what we all recognise to be our duty as Christians, but which often remains undone, because we do not quite see how to set about it.

"I am enclosing for each of you three leaflets : (1) the little quarterly leaflet of Intercession for Missions ; (2) a paper about the ' King's Workers ' ; and (3) one on Mission work for Girls.

"Probably many of you have the former already ; if so, please pass on this copy to someone else ; and if not, I pray you to read it, and use it ; and if you are not now doing anything definite in fulfilment of our Master's last behest, will you think about becoming a ' King's Worker,' or try regularly to work for some special mission ? I know many of you do so already, and these need no persuasion to go on ; but for those who do not know much about it, I would say, ' take in, and read, the *Mission Field*, or some other missionary magazine, and then choose some one mission which you can help—Central Africa, Poona, Melanesia, or any of the S.P.G. Missions, so that you can realise, with living interest, the workers, and the men, women and children

for whom they work. If in any way we can help or advise you, we will gladly do so ; but in most parishes there is some sort of organisation which would give you all the guidance you need.

" In any case, if you desire to help forward the great cause, and to fight as Christ's faithful soldiers and servants in the war which must infallibly lead to victory, when 'the kingdoms of this world' become 'the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ,' you will assuredly find some means of doing so.—Yours affectionately,

" ALICE OTTLEY."

Again, in the March number of *White and Blue*, 1907, she appended to the notes of Canon Claughton's Advent Address to the Guild on the subject of King's Messengers and King's Workers, the following note :

" Although Canon Claughton's Address was given in Advent, its subject is peculiarly suitable to our own special Festival of the Ascension, when we recall the last recorded words our Lord and Master spoke on earth, immediately before 'He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of the sight' of His Apostles—the marching orders to His nascent Church : 'ye shall be witnesses unto Me . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth.' Would it not be well for us, on that day, when we shall be communicating with special thought of our beloved school, to pray that we may, as a school, and each in her own life, do our best to carry out this His last command ? and that to some amongst us may be given the vocation to give personal service in the mission field ? For girls who are interested in science, a most noble field is open in medical work such as women alone can do ; this means a long course of study and preparation, but hundreds of men are willing to do it for the sake of merely belonging to a noble and beneficent profession ; is it not a thousand times more worth while when, besides and beyond this, there is the power to raise the womanhood of the millions of India, and to win for Christ His redeemed ones, whom none but medical women can reach at all ?

"And for the many who cannot afford this costly training, every form of power and of knowledge they can gain can be utilised, if the will of self-dedication be there, in one or other part of the world.

"We have proved, again and again, the mighty power of united prayer; let us once more use it on Ascension Day. A. O."

Writing in the course of the next year to one of her old Hampstead girls, she said:

"My beloved school has become keenly missionary during the last few years. We always have a missionary in training, with a special scholarship for the purpose; and three of ours are now working in Japan."

II

In the spring of 1907, after a previous break-down in health from which she had never fully recovered, Miss Ottley was persuaded by her Council to leave the school a fortnight before term ended, in order to get a good holiday in Italy. She came back rested and much refreshed, and this year, to celebrate the school's twenty-fourth birthday, she presented it with a new and enlarged edition of the daily prayer-book. The Offices were unchanged, but special psalms, lessons, and prayers for Commemoration Day and other festivals, were added.

This year the "reformed" Latin pronunciation was introduced into the school, and greatly improved the singing of the Latin hymn on speech-day.

Early in 1908, Miss Ottley, still "dreaming dreams and seeing visions" for her school's welfare, invited all her Old Girls to Worcester in July, to celebrate the school's "Silver Commemoration," and suggested that this should be marked "by inaugurating a scheme of bursaries, which are greatly needed to enable parents

of just the children for whom the school is intended, to take advantage of it."

On Ascension Day of the same year, she wrote to them again, as follows :

" WORCESTER HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS,
Ascension Day, 1908.

" MY DEAR ' CHILDREN ' (if I may still use the word),— This day, on which I know that our hearts are knit in intercession for the school we love, is fraught with more than usually solemn feelings, now that the little band, who gathered on that June morning in 1883, has become nearly fifteen hundred, of whom more than fifty have passed into the higher life ; while the twelve hundred are scattered in every quarter of the world, doing their life's-work well and faithfully. I love to think that in far Japan and New Zealand, in India and Ceylon, in Canada, the West Indies and South America, in every part of South Africa, in Syria and Egypt, as well as in the countries of Europe and the counties of Great Britain, the air is tremulous with the breath of prayers wafted heavenwards ; for on this day, at least, ' the sun will never set upon the lands where hearts are claiming the promise to those who shall agree, touching anything they shall ask ' for our school. And may we not believe that we are remembered also in the blessed Paradise of Peace, in the more availing prayer of those who see, with clearer insight, the momentous issue of the battle we are fighting here ? Naturally, as all these pass before one's mind's eye, the first thought is of wondering gratitude for the unspeakable ' mercy and goodness ' that have followed us throughout all these years ; so undeserved, so far beyond all that we could ask or think, that the deepest cry of our heart is, ' Non nobis Domine.'

" Our ' little one ' has ' become a thousand ' ; our work has grown in ever-widening circles ; there have been times of loss, of sorrow, and of difficulty ; but always, just the help for the daily need has been sent us ; and if I crave your constant prayers, I beg you also to

join in most humble and hearty thanks for all the countless blessings that the Father in heaven has showered upon us ; for the wonderful kindness of friends ; for the self-sacrifice and devotion of the staff ; for the love and loyalty of the Old Girls, and of the present children ; and for the many who have passed to their rest, leaving us the inspiring example of their beautiful lives.

" I trust that a large number of old and present girls and mistresses will be in the Cathedral at 8 o'clock on the morning of Tuesday, July 28, to join in our special Eucharist ; and that those who cannot be present there, will be with us in spirit, and unite their praises and thanksgivings to ours.

" But we must not be satisfied with looking back to the past, nor rest content with the present ; if we do not go forward we shall assuredly slip back ; and all our effort is needed now, to hold our own in the great educational crisis through which we are passing. We cannot get help from the rates ; we have no endowments ; we will not accept grants on the terms on which they are offered us ; we must press on, and cling to our right to be a distinctly and distinctively religious school ; and this will inevitably cost money. We have been obliged to raise the fees in order to meet the ever-increasing requirements of higher education ; and there are many of those for whom specially the school is intended, who cannot afford the expense. Therefore it is that our ' Silver Commemoration ' thank-offering is to be the inauguration of a Bursary Scheme to help such cases ; and of a Loan Fund, from which girls can borrow, without interest, such sums as will enable them to go on to the University, or to other higher training, to fit them for their life's work ; they can refund the money when they begin to earn a sufficient stipend.¹

" I commend the scheme to all who care for religious education, and beg them to persevere, year by year, in doing what they can ; and the ' many littles ' will ' make a mickle ' ; and the fund will grow as the number of

¹ This hope of establishing a Loan Fund was not realised in Miss Ottley's lifetime.

Old Girls increases, so that many, who could not otherwise come to the school at all, may, in their turn, become keen and helpful 'Old Girls.'

"To some it may be easier to give a donation at once, than to remember an annual or terminal subscription, and gladly we shall receive such donations; but for most, I imagine, one penny a week put by will be the least burdensome mode of giving, and this will amount to more than the promised 3s. a year.

"Each subscriber will be told the name and address of her 'Collector,' and all subscriptions should be paid on or before June 20 for annual, and also October 20 and February 20 for terminal, subscribers. Subscriptions will be acknowledged in the magazine, for to send receipts would sensibly diminish the fund; and we hope every one will remember the dates fixed, to save the trouble and expense of sending reminders.

"I suppose that all Old Girls and Mistresses, who care to keep in touch with the school, take *White and Blue*, for this is our only means of communication; and we are grateful for any items of information that any Old Girl will send us about herself or others, to add to its interest.

"Please remember that the best help you can give, is to send to the school other girls, like yourselves, to become what you are to-day; for it is indeed literally true that 'I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always, in every prayer of mine for you all, making request with joy. . . . Being confident of this very thing, that He, which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of JESUS CHRIST.'—I am, as ever, your affectionate friend,

"ALICE OTTLEY."

III

In 1908, as in 1904, there was a double Commemoration. June 20, this year, fell on a Saturday, and the school was therefore able to keep the birthday on its actual anniversary. Letters and telegrams of con-

gratulation continued to pour in throughout the day from all parts of the world. The first item of the afternoon entertainment was the recitation of a sonnet written by one of the Old Girls, and addressed to Miss Ottley herself, though it was characteristically disclaimed by her, and applied to her beloved school.

TO THE HIGH SCHOOL, FOR JUNE 20.

Hail to thee, Mother ! The swift years that fleet
Do but bring added gifts to honour thee.
Another pearl falls on the rosary
We tell so proudly ; one more chaplet sweet
Red-blossoming June casts down before thy feet,
Where other Junes in time past left their fee
Of other crowns, and where the years to be
Shall in like manner lay fresh offerings meet.
And we, thy daughters, bring thee for our part
The love, true as the needle to its pole,
Of all the years, beating as in one heart :
The homage of the many in one whole.
Mother, take these our birthday gifts, who art
More dearly loved as changing seasons roll !

For the gift of a very pretty coffee service, given her that day by her " First Brood," she wrote her thanks as follows :

" WORCESTER,
June 20, 1908.

" MY VERY DEAR ' FIRST BROOD,'—Your most beautiful present has come this morning, and from my heart I thank you for the loving thought which has prompted it ; and only wish I could express a little of the gratitude I feel for what you did, twenty-five years ago, by sharing all my aspirations for the future of the school. If, in those early days, we ' dreamed dreams ' which have been fulfilled beyond our hopes, it has been the spirit you infused into it at its birth which has made such realisation possible ; as it is your unfailing love and

loyalty, your prayers and your helpfulness, carried on by many generations of girls, that enable us still to 'see visions' of the school of the future, growing in ever-widening circles of usefulness, by God's blessing poured upon those who shall teach and learn, where we have taught and learnt; and upon each 'Old Girl,' who becomes herself a centre of loving service, of gentle refinement, and of the high ideals which you made, once for all, to be the tradition of the Worcester High School.—I am, ever your grateful and affectionate

“ALICE OTTLEY.”

Of the Commemoration of July 27 and 28, Miss Ottley wrote afterwards in *White and Blue* :

“MY DEAR CHILDREN,—The Silver Commemoration has come and gone, passing so quickly, that it seems, in retrospect, like a brief, bright, wonderful dream, crowding into ten short hours memories of a quarter of a century—visions realised, hopes fulfilled, aspirations accomplished, not without an undertone of sadness in the thought of the many who were with us in those early days, who inspired and helped us, and have passed out of sight, but never out of mind; thoughts, too, of many who had hoped to be with us, but were kept away by sorrow or by suffering; yet all linked together by the threefold cord of a common faith, hope and love. The hundreds who gathered at the altar in the Cathedral, on that lovely July morning, could not but feel the nearness of all who had ever worshipped with us, however widely scattered now. It was a *Eucharist* indeed; a thanksgiving for abounding gifts of our Father's love, showered upon us through all the years; and a true *Communion*, drawing us closer to each other in Him Who was present to refresh and to strengthen us, that we might go back to our various kinds of work with renewed energy and devotion: our young ideals revived, 'our wills new-braced and set,'

‘To run, untired, love's blessed race, even to the end.’

“It is most unlikely that ever, on earth, we shall all

meet again ; but the bond which unites us is one that neither life nor death has power to sever. May God in His mercy grant that all may meet in ' the eternal leisure of calm love ' beyond.—Your ever affectionate

“ALICE OTTLEY.

“P.S.—I must take this opportunity of thanking most warmly all the Old Girls who joined in the beautiful gift of the gold watch and bracelet. I need hardly say that this and the coffee set given by the 'First Brood' are among my dearest treasures.

“Our hearty thanks also to the many who sent telegrams or wrote letters, far too numerous to be acknowledged separately, but delightful to receive.”

And in a letter to one of her old Hampstead girls she said :

“The gathering was an untold joy ; but passed so quickly, it seems like a dream. One can never forget the long stream of sweet, young, purposeful faces at the altar, where most of them had, long before, been confirmed ; many now mothers ; all doing good work in the world ; and one felt almost all the thirteen hundred were there in spirit. Then in the evening, when they met in the large hall, how they talked ! until I really had to finish up things with 'Auld Lang Syne.' I know it is, humanly speaking, impossible that we should meet again on earth, or that when there is another such gathering, I should be there ; but I think one may trust that the traditions they have made, will remain in the school they love and pray for.”

IV

Apart from the happiness connected with the Silver Commemoration, the twenty-fifth year of the school's life was an anxious one for Miss Ottley. Her report, written in November, stated that the past year had been in some respects a crisis in the life of the school, as in

education generally throughout the country. Several schools had been started in the city and county, maintained by the rates, and receiving large grants from Government; and these were, therefore, able to give secondary education at less than half its cost price, and were doing excellent work in the preparation of pupil teachers for their profession, and would necessarily become formidable competitors to the High School, especially in the matter of the teachers' stipends. Under these circumstances, it had become necessary for High Schools, which desired to maintain their liberty in the matter of curriculum and time-table, and above all, in that of freedom of religious teaching, to raise their fees, in order to increase the stipend-fund. This the Council had done at the beginning of the new school year, and it was satisfactory to note that the number of entries had increased rather than diminished. Miss Ottley rejoiced in the inauguration of the Bursary scheme, to meet the needs of parents, whose circumstances made even the small addition to the fee a difficulty, and appealed to all who were interested in maintaining religious education to support the fund.¹

Not only did the question of the future of her school cause her anxiety. The future of the nation had a constant place in her thoughts and prayers. The tendency towards non-religious education, and the consequent growth of irreligion, the increasing luxury and self-indulgence of the age, the lack of reverence in the young, the tendency to ignore the fact of the presence of evil—these things filled her with dismay.

Yet in all her letters on these subjects there sounds a note of hope. "God ruleth over all; we dare not de-

¹ Several bursaries are now available at the High School, and are allotted at the discretion of the Bursary Committee.

spair." In another letter she wrote, "I feel more and more that we have nothing to do with solving the problems of the future; we have only to serve our own generation by the will of God, and then to 'fall on sleep,' and leave all in trust that 'God's in His heaven' and all will be 'right with the world.'" And in yet another, "Perhaps one lesson of Easter-tide may be, that, as the human body of our LORD was done to death, and then rose to the triumphant new life, so will His mystical body, crushed to death by the world outwardly, rise again to the fulness of life in Him spiritually."

These last few years of Miss Ottley's life, though marked by failing bodily health, by anxieties, by sorrows manifold, were yet very happy ones—intensely happy for her staff and school, happy for herself also.

"If one tried to say," writes one of her staff, "what was most noticeable in her during these last years, no doubt it would be a growing dependence on, a trustful acceptance of, the will of God." And this resulted in increased calm and peace of mind. At first, the pain of her coming resignation was too great to be hidden completely; she could only speak of it to a very few, and to them not without distress, but latterly, though the pain never lessened, she learned to contemplate it calmly, and to speak of it as a settled matter.

It was in 1910 that she first placed her resignation in Lord Cobham's hands, but when, in the name of the Council, he begged her to wait a little longer, it was with eager happiness that she consented to remain at her post.¹ For there were yet more "dreams" to be realised.

¹ "The thought of 'rest' has never attracted me," she wrote two years later, in answer to one of the letters received at the time of her actual resignation; "'His servants shall serve Him,' seems to me the reward one thinks of."

This year, in response to her appeal, the old and present girls, the staff and other friends, again rose to the occasion, and in a wonderfully short time supplied the school laboratory with the equipment which was needed to put the science teaching upon a satisfactory footing. And in 1911, she instituted a "Senior Department" of the school, in which instruction is given to girls beyond school age, who wish to take up some special study in their leisure time. Later in this year, a long-cherished desire was fulfilled in the purchase and conveyance to the Diocesan Trustees, of Springfield, the large boarding-house in Britannia Square.

There was another project, however, which was very near to Miss Ottley's heart, but was destined not to be completed in her lifetime. She had long desired to change the constitution of the school, by converting it from a commercial enterprise into a non-dividend paying company. If the change were made, all its funds, whether present or future, would be available for the welfare and improvement of the school. In a word—and for want of a better expression—the school would belong to itself instead of to the shareholders. After Miss Ottley's death, the matter was warmly taken up by the Council with a view to carrying the scheme into effect. A great number of shareholders were good enough voluntarily to surrender the financial rights in respect of their shares, and with the generous help of friends, the remaining shares have been purchased from others, who—however well disposed—could not afford to adopt this course. As a result of much work and prolonged negotiations, it was found possible to announce at the prize-giving on December 6, 1913, that the consent of the whole of the shareholders had been obtained, and that, subject to certain legal formalities, the school would shortly be reorganised on the lines

already indicated, under the name of "The Alice Ottley School."¹

The Parochial Mission held throughout Worcester in November, 1910, was warmly welcomed by Miss Ottley, who wrote in *White and Blue* as follows :

"MY DEAR CHILDREN,—The Bishop and the clergy of Worcester are organising a ten days' mission, to be held in every parish in the city, from November 8 to 18, *i.e.*, just before Advent ; and it will be our part, as lay people, to respond to this effort to revive spiritual life, by using the opportunity to the best of our power, so far as our daily work permits it. Arrangements will vary in different parishes, and the least we can do will be to forego, for the time, all kinds of amusement, and of unnecessary worldly occupation ; and to give ourselves up, heart and soul, to listening for the message God may send *us*, and to making it possible for others also to go to the special services, by any means in our power. We cannot shirk the responsibility that 'whether we hear or whether we forbear,' the call has come to each one, and at our risk we reject it.

"In the meantime, if we and our fellow-citizens are to gain all we might from this special opportunity, we must prepare for it by prayer, fervent and persevering, that God's Holy Spirit may work in us and among us, to make us ready to receive the Word into our hearts.

"And if it is to be a deep and abidingly fruitful time for us, we must avoid all excitement ; there must be no self-pleasing, no running hither and thither to different churches, seeking favourite preachers, and exciting services ; but a humble and quiet acceptance

¹ That the name of the school should be changed was also a part of Miss Ottley's scheme, as she felt that the term "High School," which now suggests a school controlled by the Board of Education, and obliged to take pupils from the elementary schools, would no longer be appropriate. At the time of her resignation, she gave her consent to the proposal that her name should be connected with the school.

of what God sends to each, not as we will, but as He wills.—Your affectionate
ALICE OTTLEY.”

When the missionaries came, many of the High School girls attended the daily children's service at St. George's church, conducted by the Rev. A. Baring-Gould, Miss Ottley herself accompanying them, and following up the instruction thus given, in her own Tuesday “ talks.”

The year 1910 ended sadly for her with the death of her brother Edward, Canon of Rochester, who had never recovered from the strain involved in his work in the mission of help to South Africa. In the course of 1911, she was weighed down with burdens manifold—the illness of an intimate friend who had for some time lived with her at the High School ; the deaths of other friends, the industrial unrest, contrasting so strangely with the glory of that wonderful summer. Yet she went bravely on with her work, awaiting calmly the right moment for laying it down. And how she worked ! Every moment of each day seemed to have its special duty which had to be punctually performed, and with which no weariness or disinclination was allowed to interfere. Except for loss of memory, her mental vigour was amazing ; on her last speech-day, in November 1911, she was as brilliant as ever, her voice had the same clearness as in former years, her grasp of affairs was no less firm. Those who worked with her, indeed, saw the bodily powers failing, saw, with mixed feelings of pain and gladness, her readier willingness to rest when it was suggested to her ; but to outsiders, and to the occasional visitor, she was the same strong, bright, interested listener and sympathiser that she had always been.

It was impossible to think of her as “ old ” ; in her

intercourse with the young she kept her youth, and her eager interest in things new and things beautiful remained fresh to the end. "I never in my life saw such a young old lady," said a friend of one of her Old Girls, in summing up the delights of an expedition with her to Fairford, in the Easter holidays of 1911.

"One thing which struck me very much about Miss Ottley," writes one of those who were trained in the new training department, "was her wonderful power of identifying herself with the generation to which she was talking. I remember discussing some question of my future work with her, and realising that she had been talking entirely as my contemporary, as contrasted with the parental point of view—a wonderful feat of knowledge and sympathy!"

"Never," writes one of her fellow-workers, "were her relations with her staff happier than in these last years, when bodily weakness made her less able than of old to keep every department of the work under her direct supervision. She loved and trusted us with a rare generosity, leaving us a very free hand in planning our work, but claiming, even exacting from us, an entire loyalty to the traditions of the school, and an unreserved frankness with her, as regards even the details of our teaching, and especially as regards our individual dealing with the children under our care. And it was to her, as to a mother, that each of us went with our joys and sorrows, sure of the ready sympathy, the uplifting comfort, the wise guidance, that never failed. How trivial our little troubles seemed sometimes when she had helped us to lift them out of the sordid rut of selfishness. And a grievance melted away as one told it out to her. Love never made her blind to one's faults, and she would express grave warning, strong disapproval, even serious blame, without apparent hesitation (though one sometimes found afterwards that it had cost her a painful effort), and all with the implicit trust that such

words, spoken in love, could never be taken amiss by one of her children. It was the confident assumption that one was good enough to profit by blame, that shamed one into trying to do so."

V

The spring term of 1912, with its Confirmation classes and Lenten "talks," proved too great a strain upon the now weary frame. "I very nearly had a break-down," she wrote to a friend, "so nearly that I felt I was no longer fit for my work, and sent in my resignation. You know what that means of heart-break; but it was the right, and the only right, thing to do. One does not, at seventy-two, recover the spring and youthfulness which young folks need."

The Council met on the Saturday before school opened for the summer term, and "with great reluctance and regret" accepted her resignation. For a week she went on with her work, outwardly cheery, bright and business-like as usual, but after mark-reading on the first Tuesday of term, she was so exhausted that it was easy to persuade her to call in a doctor, and he advised a fortnight's rest in bed in the mornings. She never took morning prayers again.

To the children her resignation came as a complete surprise. "Although we knew Miss Ottley was not well," writes her last Head præfect, "we had never for a moment imagined that it would be possible for the school to exist without her. When Miss Mackworth¹ announced her resignation at morning prayers on Wednesday, May 8, we remained standing, speechless, for the moment hardly realising what it meant."

The Sixth Form, in the name of the school, wrote her

¹ Second mistress of the school.

the following letter, which was given her by the Head præfect, on Friday, May 10 :

“THE HIGH SCHOOL, WORCESTER.

“DEAREST MISS OTTLEY,—We should all like you to know how sorry we are to hear from Miss Mackworth that you are going to resign your position as Head-mistress of the school.

“We shall never forget how much you have done for the school as a whole, and for each one of us ; and we are sure that your influence will remain with us, as a help and guidance throughout our lives. Those of us who are staying on will try in every way to help your successor to maintain the standard which you have always set before the school, ever since its foundation.

“Although you will no longer be with us, we shall always remember you, especially when we all meet together daily for prayers in the large hall.

“We shall always be, dear Miss Ottley, your loving children,

“WINIFRED ANTON (for Form VIA),

“MARJORIE CHAPPEL (for Form VIB),

“and the Præfects of the other forms.”

The following Tuesday, May 14, each child received a copy of Miss Ottley's letter in reply :

“THE WORCESTER HIGH SCHOOL.

“MY DEAR CHILDREN,—As I am not to come down until midday on Tuesday, I must write a word of thanks for your very nice letter, which says just what I hoped and believed you would feel as to the future of our beloved school, and your own part in it, and also to recall to us all, that on Ascension Day,¹ ‘Old Girls,’ and Mistresses everywhere, and surely all of us who are still here, will join in asking for GOD's blessing on it at this crisis in its life ;—that it may please Him to guide by His Holy Spirit the choice of a new Head-mistress,

¹ Ascension Day fell on May 16.

and endue her with all the gifts and powers she' will need to carry on the work ; and abundantly to help and bless all who work with her, whether as Mistresses or children, that the school may ever grow in goodness and in success.

" I thank you also for promising to remember me in your Tuesday morning prayers, as I assuredly shall *you* ; and I beg you above all, to pray that all the many, many faults and failings, which I know well, of these twenty-nine years, may be forgiven. Pray also on Ascension Day for all the ' Old Girls ' and Mistresses, wherever they may be, and especially for any who are in trouble, or suffering, particularly Winifred Ragg.¹ And let us not forget to thank and bless our heavenly Father for all the wonderful mercies He has given us, and to ' show forth His praise not only with our lips, but in our lives.'—Ever your loving old Head-mistress,
" ALICE OTTLEY."

The next few weeks passed without much change. She came downstairs about eleven o'clock each day, took all lessons that fell later than that, and managed her " At Home " days to parents, mission working-party, &c., much as usual, but she did not regain her strength.

On May 24, she went with one of her staff to London, for a gathering of members of the Society of the Holy Name, and was able to enjoy seeing her old friends.

Meanwhile, on May 23, some members of the Council had met at the school to consider the applications for the Head-mistress-ship. This was a very trying day for her, but she was full of faith and hope for the future, and of solicitude for her staff. " During the last two years," writes one who was much in her confidence at the time, " she had perhaps been tempted to set her heart too strongly on first one and then another, as her

¹ One of her children, who had met with an accident and was very ill at this time.

successor ; but it was touching to see how, the instant she became aware of the eagerness of her own desire, she yielded it wholly into God's hands. Three times disappointment came, and each time there was the unreserved yielding, the sure trust that the choice would fall on the right person in God's good time."

"I am on the small 'selection committee' for choosing my successor," she wrote to a friend, "and have a confidence that she *is* selected, by the great Task-Master, Who will give her to us when the time comes."

On Saturday, June 1, out of four selected candidates, Miss Spurling, second mistress at the Francis Holland School, Graham Street, London, was chosen by the Council. Miss Ottley welcomed her warmly, with the unhesitating assurance that she was God's choice, and on the following Friday, June 7, Miss Spurling came to spend three days with her, and was initiated into the ways of the High School.

It was not till the next Thursday, June 13, when she had bravely held up through all that was necessary for the handing over of the school to her successor, that her overtaxed frame gave way. By Sunday, June 16, she was so ill, that the plan was devised of moving her (for a few days only, as she expected), to her sister's house in Britannia Square, where she could be more quietly tended than was possible at the High School. Here she lay peacefully resting during the weeks that remained of the term ; and thus, in God's providence, she was spared many of the "last things," that must have caused her pain—the school's birthday, the Guild meeting, the yearly kindergarten party, the final mark-reading and good-byes. It was fitting that the last words she said to her assembled school, were those of the midday blessing : "The LORD bless us and keep us. . . ."

Under her sister's tender care and nursing she revived somewhat,—sufficiently to receive daily visits from some one or two of her staff or children, and to answer a few of the touching letters, which, since her resignation had been made public, had come pouring in from near and far.

To her Guild she wrote :

“BRITANNIA SQUARE, WORCESTER.

“MY MOST DEAR CHILDREN OF THE GUILD,—It is impossible for words to convey a tithe of my loving gratitude for all the letters and the loving thought the last two months have brought me ; the delicate and perfect sympathy in our common pain of parting, I heartily accept, and with it, the joyful assurance that there can be no real separation ; the bond that knits us, each to all, is too deep and true. We are one in the aim in which we started our little Guild, when we ‘dreamed dreams and saw visions,’ which are still, day by day, being fulfilled, as each finds the particular calling in which she, personally, is to fulfil the general vocation common to us all, ‘called to be Saints’ ; sharing the life of the Master, in Him, for Him, with Him ; expressing Him in every form of daily life,—in the home, in the slum, in the ward, in the school, in the place of business, in the nursery, in the mission, in the college, in the ballroom, and in the bedroom—behind the outer life, always the inner ; the spiritual, the Ascension life ; the life sustained at His altar. Some of you thank me for help given, but I am sure you will all believe and know that it is not I, but the beloved school, which has helped us all, and will help still, lifting life for us into a pure atmosphere of love and joy and peace. And to all of you, whether in the Guild or not, let me send a word of loving and hearty congratulation, that God in His mercy has answered abundantly our prayers, in sending you a Head-mistress, who will more than carry on the traditions of the school ; for she will bring to it the fresh life, which I could no longer

infuse, and will be the centre and leader of the onward movement, which I am confident is before you, for I know you are prepared to be 'love-loyal to her lightest wish,' and that she has a staff who will be her strong and willing helpers ; so that I dare foresee a beautiful future for the school.

" But please remember that a school is made of children, and that the loveliest ideas, and the most splendid teachers, cannot produce one without them ; and it is for you to find the nice girls, who need what this school can give :—culture, refinement, as well as the highest instruction and training in each subject. Only by those, who know the school well, sticking loyally to it, and taking the trouble to speak up for it, can we hope to keep a stream of such girls. So be brave, and never lose a chance of giving the new prospectus, when it comes out, to fresh parents and to former ones. *Floreat in æternum Schola puellarum Vigorniensis*.—Your loving old Head,

ALICE OTTLEY.

" *Eve of St. Peter, 1912.*

" P.S.—Since I wrote this, I have received the dear little note from those of you who were at the Guild meeting. I could not write then, as Canon Claughton was with me ; but I am really perfectly overwhelmed with all the love and kindness that have been showered upon me. I am sure that you, (being you), will understand that the one thing I crave is your prayers, that, if indeed GOD has willed, of His goodness, ever to send you any message of His love through so worthless an instrument, my own words may not rise in judgment, in contrast of what He knows of my life ; but that His vast forgiveness may enwrap us all, and so purify us, that our old selves may be lost, and that we may stand at last, complete in Him, in the light of His perpetual Presence, through the infinite merits of our LORD and MASTER, JESUS CHRIST."

The following characteristic letter is very kindly lent by Mrs. Woodhouse, Head-mistress of the Clapham

High School,¹ to whom it was written, "beautifully, with no sign of failing strength, not a word or letter slurred, and with the scrupulously accurate punctuation on which she always insisted":

"July 2, 1912.

"Such sympathy, dear friend, is most sweet and helpful, but indeed I am distressed by the terrible contrast between the reality of a life full of failure and shortcoming, and the ideal that you have imagined; it crushes one with a sense of its unreality.

"Yes, the uprooting is very hard; but you know how it is at *such* times that one learns most to know the tenderness of the Love that leads us step by step.

"I have no plans for the future; for the collapse of power was so sudden and so complete at last, that I can only lie still and wait.

"I hope to see my beloved colleagues, one by one; but even should I recover strength to do it, I am not to go into the school again before I finally leave Worcester; nor to write any letters.

"My successor, to my great joy, is appointed; and is all that I can desire; so that I hope and believe the school must grow and prosper in her stronger and abler hands; and the staff are almost all remaining with her, they and the children resolved to help her all they can.

"Whenever the inevitable time shall come for you, I only hope you may have the same wonderful help and love showered upon you; and I am sure you will have all the guidance to make your way perfectly clear.—With most grateful love, ever your affectionate

"ALICE OTTLEY."

One or two more letters she wrote; one to the school, in thanks for the roll-top table with which they presented her:

"38 BRITANNIA SQUARE, WORCESTER,
July 20, 1912.

"MY DEAR CHILDREN,—I can find no words to thank you, as I would, for your most beautiful and valuable

¹ Mrs. Woodhouse resigned her Head-mistress-ship in 1913.

gift. I cannot imagine anything more delightful or charming, and am only distressed to think how very much it must have cost you all. It will come, at once, into daily and constant use ; and more precious still is the wonderful love which prompted it, and which you have evidenced in a thousand other ways.

" God bless you each and all, now and for ever. My heart will be with you very much this week ; it will be a bright and happy end of term, for you have all worked well, and the results are most cheering.

" I wish you all the happiest possible holidays, and a joyful meeting again with a great many nice new girls of the right sort to keep up the old traditions in September.—Your affectionate ' old Head,'

" ALICE OTTLEY."

And in the following note she expressed her thanks for the cheque given her by countless Old Girls and mistresses and other friends :

" WORCESTER,
July, 1912.

" MY DEAR FRIENDS,—May I venture to include in this one descriptive category, the hundreds to whom it would be impossible to write separately, but to every one of whom I want to express what no words can adequately convey, of gratitude for the wonderful gift, which is, to me, nothing less than the fulfilment of a life's dream, *i.e.* a long visit to Italy in the spring ?

" It only distresses me that it should be the outcome of a most exaggerated estimate of my work. I have only done my simple daily duty, and that most imperfectly—and it has been immensely over-rewarded already, in the joy of the work itself, through twenty-nine happy years.

" The happiness has also been your gift—a reflection of the love which has brought us together, and given to each a share in realising our ideal for our much-loved school, which I rejoice to believe is entering upon a new era, and going on to even better things in the future.—

I am, and always shall be, your most grateful and affectionate
ALICE OTTLEY."

Although the news of her resignation came with a shock to the school, there were some among her Sixth Form, to whom, during her last months with them, even so early as the previous All Saints' Day, there had come a premonition that she was nearing the end of her earthly life. They hoped that rest and change would restore her health, but they had forebodings, as they saw a new spiritual beauty shining through her worn features, and noticed, as it seemed to them, a deeper peace, an even larger thoughtfulness and kindness, than before. Meanwhile the girls, one and all, led by the Sixth, did their utmost to respond to her ideals for them during this, her last term as their Head. "The children have been so good," she said, and it was an infinite help and comfort to her through the difficult time.

Term ended very quietly. When all had dispersed, Miss Ottley went over to the school, and looked into every room, to see that all was ready for her successor. This done, she was satisfied to go with her sister to Teignmouth, where it was hoped the sea air might do her good. They left Worcester on August 8. As the train steamed out of the station, she leant forward to look out of the window, and said, "Farewell, Worcester."

After spending ten days at Teignmouth, they went on to Paignton for a few weeks. In each place she was content to lie resting, driving a little, seeing very few people, but quite happily awaiting the time when a specialist, whom she was to consult in London, should have returned to town. On September 13, her sister brought her to London, to a little house near Regent's Park, which had been lent her by kind friends. As she was leaving Paignton station, an old friend, who

had come to see her off, expressed the hope that she would visit Paignton again some day in better health. "Italy first," she answered with her old bright smile, "and then Paignton." She was restless during the journey, and when they reached London, her strength was utterly exhausted. Within a few hours bronchial pneumonia set in. All was done that could be done; an excellent doctor and two kind nurses were called in; oxygen was administered and allayed the difficulty of breathing, but it soon became clear to those who watched, that at last her amazing vitality had spent itself, and that the end was at hand.

Amid surroundings of quiet beauty she lay peacefully awaiting her last call.

"'I wish I had done God's way only.' These were some of the last words heard, as she lay half-unconscious, the day before her passing. She repeated them several times, very wistfully, but with no sign of distress, and very soon the little gleam of apparent consciousness passed away, and she lay silent again.

"But the words called up to our minds a very vivid picture of the last years of her life, when the same desire for the exact fulfilment of the Divine will, which had been characteristic of her even as a child, had borne very evident fruit."

So writes one, who was privileged to keep watch by her side, through some part of the five days during which her illness lasted.

On Tuesday, September 17, she was able quite consciously to receive the Blessed Sacrament brought to her from S. Mary Magdalene's Church,¹ close by, and later she was heard to say, dreamily, several times over, "I want to see with my own eyes, and hear with my own ears."

¹ Munster Square.

All Wednesday, the 18th, she lay silent and apparently unconscious ; during the last few hours her arms were outstretched as though on a cross, and at 9.20 that evening, as the commendatory prayer was being said, her breathing ceased. At the moment of passing, there was a wonderful look of victory, bright and triumphant, which gradually passed into the look of happy calm, of sweet and solemn serenity, which brought so much comfort to those who saw the beloved face at rest.

A beautiful lily was placed upon her breast, the bed was strewn with white and blue flowers, and it so chanced that on the wall above her head was a branch of palm, cut in the shape of a sickle.

Apart from the effect of her illness, which always involves, as it becomes acute, a certain physical and mental detachment from ordinary things and people, those nearest to her noticed, during the last weeks of Alice Ottley's life, a growing repose of spirit and a kind of quiet expectancy, which seemed to anticipate the call which she was so soon to hear. She had often expressed a wish to die in harness, and God gave her her wish, in taking her to Himself on the very day fixed for the re-assembling of her beloved school.

She was laid to rest at Worcester, on St. Matthew's Day, one of those rare, beautiful, sunny days, with which her gatherings were almost always blessed.

The nave of the Cathedral, in which the first part of the burial service was held, was crowded by a great congregation of friends and mourners, including the Head-mistress with the staff and the children, who wore their straw hats trimmed with the white and blue ribbon of the school. Many former members of the school were present ; also representatives of the Council, and a large number of clergy and lay people belonging

to the city and district. Loving hands had filled the altar vases and covered the choir steps with lilies. The Cathedral clergy and choir, the chaplain of St. Oswald's (Miss Ottley's near neighbour and constant friend), and the Bishop of the diocese, attended by his chaplain, met the coffin at the north-west door. The lesson was read by the Dean; then followed the anthem, "I heard a voice from heaven," sung unaccompanied. The remainder of the service, except the prayer of committal, was read by Canon Claughton. Then the Nunc Dimittis was sung, and with the singing of the hymn, "Through the night of doubt and sorrow,"¹ the solemn and touching ceremony in the Cathedral was brought to a close. Most of the congregation followed the hearse to the Astwood Cemetery. There the committal was said by the chaplain of St. Oswald's (the Rev. G. F. Hooper), and the benediction was given by the Bishop. Finally the girls of the High School sang exquisitely, "Now the labourer's task is o'er," and when the nearest relatives, her sister, brothers, and nieces, had taken a last look into the grave, lined with white and blue flowers from the school garden, their example was followed by a multitude of sorrowing friends. Yet sorrow was almost quenched in thanksgiving: in heartfelt gratitude to God for the work and influence of His servant; in joy that she had entered into her rest, —had passed upwards and onwards, *per ardua ad alta*.

VI

This memoir will fittingly end with reminiscences of his sister by Dr. R. L. Ottley:

"The last letter I received from my sister Alice is undated, but it was written in February, 1912, about

¹ The hymn from the "Office" of the High School Guild.

seven months before her death ; and as it contains a characteristic sentence, I will take it as a starting-point for the brief recollections that follow. Speaking of a recent incident, she says, ' It takes me back to my Confirmation day, when I was so proud to carry you down to Bishop Longley,¹ and he blessed us both in the little drawing-room at Richmond ; and surely through all the years that have followed, we have been wonderfully blessed and guided, and may fearlessly expect such guidance even to the end.'

" She seemed always vividly conscious of the special tie that united us two. I think that I took the place in her heart that was left vacant by the death of a little sister (Constance, or ' Cooie '), a loss which was one of the poignant griefs of Alice's girlhood. At any rate, she ' mothered ' me from my earliest infancy. The first photograph in which I appear is one in which Alice, as a girl of seventeen, with a very sweet and thoughtful face, is holding me in her arms. From my fourth or fifth year onwards I was practically given over to her charge. It must have been soon after our father's death in 1861, that she took me with her on a round of visits. We spent some time at Croft Rectory, near Darlington, the home of ' Lewis Carroll ' and his sisters. We visited Slenningford Hall, near Ripon, and Hauxwell Rectory, a very lonely place on the moors, where the Pattesons were then living.² We also spent some time at York with Dr. Shann, who was, I think, Alice's godfather. Some time in the autumn we came to London. We reached King's Cross late in the evening, and I have a dim recollection of clinging in great bewilderment to Alice as she stood on the platform, looking very tired and pale in her deep mourning, and surrounded by a little mob of porters and officials. I fancy that our tickets were not forthcoming, Alice's purse having been abstracted by an ingenious pickpocket during the

¹ At that time (1856) Bishop of Ripon ; afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury.

² The incumbent was the father of Mark Patteson, Rector of Lincoln College, and of " Sister Dora."

journey from York. The same night we arrived, without further adventures, at the house in Hampstead, which was destined to be our home for twenty-two years.

"Alice taught us younger children a good deal before we went to school, just as she had taught our sisters at Richmond. It was to her I owed my earliest knowledge of the Greek Testament, which she taught me to read, having herself learned some Greek from Dean Alford of Canterbury, an old friend of our parents. The first Greek Testament I ever possessed, a tiny volume published by Bagster, was her gift. Then came the years at school and college, when I saw Alice only in the vacations. I need say nothing here of her strenuous and self-denying work with her little band of pupils at Hampstead,—work to which we brothers knew that we owed all the educational advantages we ever enjoyed. In indirect ways we came under the spell of her influence and example. We were usually with her for the whole, or part, of the holidays, and never without gaining new impressions of her wonderful eagerness and alertness, her freshness and buoyancy of mind, her varied interests, her apparently inexhaustible knowledge of common things—flowers, trees, birds, insects, stars. She used often to read aloud in the evenings, her fingers busy with knitting or crochet-work, while we sat at a table drawing maps or painting pictures. It was always a treat to hear her read, and many of her Worcester pupils must have enjoyed what was to us a fascinating experience of our boyhood. She had also a cultivated artistic sense. She could sketch and paint well, and for many years was very proficient in the rather rare art of illuminating. In music, too, she had been carefully trained, and always took a keen delight in hearing it. One of the greatest pleasures I have enjoyed, was that of attending with her the Wagner festival at Bayreuth in 1894.

"One found a constant stimulus in the companionship of a person of such active and varied interests, such intelligence and quickness of perception, such eagerness

to learn and to impart her knowledge. I recall some words of Bishop Phillips Brooks, describing the qualities of the ideal teacher. First, of course, he places personal piety,—‘a deep possession in one’s own soul of the faith and hope and resolution,’ which one desires to kindle in others. On this side of Alice’s character I need not dwell. It is in the second quality mentioned by the Bishop, that she was specially conspicuous, I mean ‘mental and spiritual unselfishness,’—that habit of mind ‘which always conceives of truth with reference to its communication.’¹ Her early education was not in the least of the modern type, but she made up for the defects of her training, such as they were, by unsparing diligence in later life, and was, in the best sense of the term, a ‘highly cultured’ woman. Hers was the culture produced by native refinement of mind, quickness of sympathy, instinctive delicacy of perception and widely extended interests. Doubtless, too, she owed a good deal to intellectual influences which reached her through her family connexions. She was on terms of warm friendship with her cousins, Prof. John E. B. Mayor of Cambridge, and his distinguished brothers, Canon Richard Warner of Stoke Rectory, Lincolnshire, and others. She seemed at once to find herself *en rapport* with scholarly and well-stored minds; she was quick to recognise intellectual distinction. She could listen well and question intelligently; and she had a kind of genius for finding common topics and points of contact with chance acquaintances, and even with foreigners. It was instructive and delightful to hear her chatting easily and gaily in French or German with people we happened to meet abroad. Several times I travelled with her on the Continent, sometimes in the company of two or three of her friends. We were together in Rome in 1880; in Switzerland (1892); at Bayreuth (1894), and occasionally elsewhere. She was always the same eager and inspiring companion; astonishingly active in body,—her powers of recuperation after a break-down in health

¹ *Lectures on Preaching* (Allenson), pp. 38, 39.

were marvellous ; full of interest in new places and experiences ; delighting beyond measure in Alpine walks and climbs ; everywhere forming new friendships, and strengthening old ties and associations. Nor did she ever fail to seize opportunities of doing kindnesses, little and great, to strangers who chanced to be involved in those troubles—sudden illnesses, losses or disasters—which now and then occur to travellers. She brought comfort and happiness wherever she went. Numberless, indeed, were those

‘ little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love,’¹

for which she found opportunity, wherever she happened to find herself. She had a genius for sympathy. It was no wonder that people in trouble or perplexity instinctively opened their hearts to her. Her correspondence was at times almost overwhelming, and I think that a great proportion of her letters was devoted to dealing with all sorts of small personal affairs and troubles on which she had been consulted. Many occasions must be known to her friends at Worcester and elsewhere, when she was veritably an ‘ angel in the house ’ of sorrow or mourning.

“ As she grew older, one noticed in particular two things.

“ Throughout her life she was apt to be very decisive and trenchant in her judgments. Her own standard of work and conduct was very high. Her opinions on most subjects were positive and clearly defined. One could not help feeling now and then, that she was mistaken in her view of facts, or in her estimate of particular persons. In her earlier years it was not easy for her to see that there might be more than one side to a question. As life advanced, however, she certainly became more and more discriminating in her expressions of opinion, and more ready to make allowances. She formed cordial friendships with people whose social ideas or religious beliefs differed widely from her own.

¹ Wordsworth, *Tintern Abbey*, 33–35.

And though she was always devotedly loyal to the faith which had moulded her whole character and outlook upon life, she learned, through the discipline of long experience, that even poverty of character and odd perversities of opinion are often due to sheer defects of training or to unfortunate surroundings, rather than to any personal fault. Her mental horizon widened; she became less satisfied with sweeping statements; more ready to welcome new and unfamiliar points of view. She realised to an increasing extent what Dean Church calls 'the entangled and complicated character of all human questions'; and so was better able, as time went on, to bear gently with honest differences of opinion, and with the inevitable limitations of average human nature. She learned by experience the value of the wise maxim, 'He who would love mankind must never expect too much of them.' So again her views on some points of religious practice underwent a gradual change. Her own lifelong habit of self-discipline at one time inclined her, I think, to be somewhat of a rigorist; but in later years she came to look at things with a new sense of proportion. She saw that there were habits and practices that were not equally adapted to all conditions of life and character, and that allowance must be made for wide varieties of temperament, age, and previous training. Some good people never seem to arrive at this point of practical wisdom and common sense.

"Again, some of us may have been struck, as time went on, by a growing 'motherliness' in Alice's dealings with people. To a certain extent this had been characteristic of her in quite early days. She loved, as I have said, to give others the benefit of any gift of knowledge or counsel she possessed; but she never had the least touch of 'priggishness.' She took others in hand, so to speak, with quiet modesty, with simple eagerness to give happiness, with the overflowing affectionateness of a warm and generous heart.

" 'It is most remarkable,' writes a friend, 'how with never very great physical powers she should grow to

be such "a mother in Israel." I remember so well many years ago, that I happened to meet her at a time when I was passing through a phase of doubt and difficulty. Alice listened quietly, and then said a few words,—very few,—but they were so strong and calm that they lifted me over one wave at least, and helped to set me again on firm ground.'

"It was part of her 'motherliness' that she always delighted in children and babies; and that she was so anxious that her girls should, as a rule, find their vocation in marriage, and in the healthful discipline of family life. I have spoken of her last letter to me; but I ought to add that, a few weeks before her death, she sent me a post-card from Worcester, faintly written in pencil, evidently with a very weak and trembling hand; 'I may not write a letter,' she says, 'but should be most grateful if you could write, just on a card, the name of any very nice book on marriage for a good and thoughtful girl; on the highest lines, but "common-sensible" withal. Great love to you all. Your most loving sister, Alice.'

"This must have been almost, if not quite, her last attempt at letter-writing, and it well illustrates the gracious trait I have been describing. Her constant desire for all whom she loved or cared for, was, not that they should hold high positions or do 'great things,' but that they should become the best that they were capable of being; that they should cherish

'among least things

An under sense of greatest; see the parts

As parts, but with a feeling of the whole,'

in a word, that their whole life should be solemnised and brightened by continual recollection of the guiding presence and providential purpose of God.

"One final point occurs to me. In various parts of this book attention has been drawn to the spirituality, the old-fashioned reverence, and the deep sense of religious duty, which were so marked a feature of Alice Ottley's character. But as I look back on her life, I

should like to leave on others the impression which is uppermost in my own mind: that of an energetic, forceful, resolute character; capable of great endurance, of steady persistence under difficulties, and of that 'inward patience' which is content to bear what each minute brings, and to fulfil wholeheartedly the task that lies immediately ahead. She had, moreover, a tenacity of purpose, a sturdy power of fighting, where questions of moral principle or educational efficiency were at stake, to which members of her school council could probably bear witness, and which won her the respect and goodwill of men no less than of women. Again, her tact, good sense and capacity in business matters were remarkable. A distinguished Oxford tutor, who was once present with her at an educational meeting, tells me that he understood on that occasion 'something of the secret of her power.' In her, ability was combined with real distinction of character. She had, to some extent no doubt, the defects of her qualities. She was by nature very impulsive, both in speech and act. She eagerly pressed her point in argument; she said with extraordinary force and directness, exactly what was in her mind; but so transparent was her sincerity, so evident her earnestness, that such plainness of speech seldom, if ever, left a sting. Indeed, there were times when her outspokenness was as refreshing as the artless candour of a child; nor could it ever quite conceal the tenderness of her heart. In the same way her idealism was always tempered by an almost masculine common sense. With a clear consciousness of what she aimed at, she did not ignore the actual facts and conditions with which she had to deal. She had, in a word, that unique touch of individuality which always commands interest: a combination of gifts and qualities, which imparted to her bearing and to her work just that 'distinction' which lifted it above the common level.

"The days of physical and mental decline are always pathetic. One noticed with pain the signs of diminished vigour during the last year or so. Alice's hold on life

seemed to relax. Towards the end, she did not care to talk or see much of her friends. She seemed to yearn for rest and silence, for solitude and peace. These were symptoms of disease, the meaning of which could not be mistaken, nor could those who loved her desire that a life, which seemed to be outworn, should be greatly prolonged. She passed away swiftly and peacefully, at the very time which she herself would have chosen. The few words that she was heard to utter towards the end, were in harmony with the whole spirit of her life—with the single-hearted desire to follow the leading of God's will.

"In the closing hours of a life like hers,—full of strenuous toil and manifold sorrow,—it is enough

'That more and more a providence
Of love is understood ;
Making the springs of time and sense
Sweet with eternal good ;

That care and trial seem at last
Through memory's sunset air,
Like mountain ranges overpast
In purple distance fair ;

That all the jarring notes of life
Seem blending in a psalm ;
And all the angles of its strife
Slow rounding into calm.'¹

"I will here close these very brief reminiscences. It would be difficult to add more without touching on what is too intimate and private to find a suitable place in this book. Enough will have been said to convey some impression of a character, in which grace and strength, tenderness and courage, gentleness and resolution, love and wisdom, were blended in no common measure. The memory of Alice Ottley will kindle in the hearts of many, a wistful desire that they may actually become, in conduct and character, all that she, in the generosity of her love, expected and believed them to be."

¹ J. G. Whittier, *My Psalm*.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER IX

(Reprinted, with slight alterations, from *The Treasury* of
November, 1912)

ALICE OTTLEY: A GREAT INFLUENCE.

(By H. M. B.)

"WE thank God for the blessing He conferred on this city when He gave us Alice Ottley." These words, spoken in Worcester Cathedral by Canon Wilson on the Sunday after her death, expressed a feeling which spread far beyond the city of Worcester. During the twenty-nine years of her headship of the Worcester High School, Miss Ottley's influence had gone deep and wide. Perhaps no one woman of her generation has had quite the same kind of influence in building up characters, and shaping spiritual ideals. In some respects it was, in its different sphere, strangely like that of Bishop King of Lincoln, whom she greatly loved and revered. There was in her, too, the like gentleness and personal charm, beautiful simplicity, magical sympathy, and strong "sanctified common sense."

When Canon Butler (of Wantage) brought Miss Ottley to Worcester in 1883 to begin the school which he and others were founding, she was quite unknown there; but when she was laid to rest on St. Matthew's Day, 1912, the Cathedral was thronged with those who came from far and near to show their love and reverence for her. It is the aim of this paper to attempt, though most inadequately, to give some account of what she was to her "children" and her fellow-workers.

At the age of forty-three, Miss Ottley consented, after some hesitation, to become Head-mistress of the Wor-

cester High School, and from that day in 1883 Worcester became her home.

The school which she then began with eleven little girls, in the fine old "Britannia House" at Worcester, had to make its own traditions. It was to provide all that was best in "higher education" on the broad, sound basis of the Church's system and doctrine; and from the first day when its Head-mistress took that rather trembling little "First Brood" to her heart with her "Good morning, my children!" it received a character from her that became its own special "note." What was this character of hers which caught the imagination and fired the purpose of hundreds of girls of widely differing capacities and circumstances; which built up a great school, and sent its strong and unmistakable influence into hundreds of homes, and into many another school at home and abroad?

Perhaps the most outstanding characteristic of Alice Ottley all through her life was the one expressed in a verse of the Lesson for the morning of her funeral, September 21: "I will very gladly spend, and be spent for you." She really did "spend" all she had of strength and talent, every faculty of body and mind, to the very end, for others; and that "gladly"—with a quite eager gladness. She reserved nothing for herself. It was impossible to make her look at anything for her own advantage. Her unstinting, ready service was at everybody's call: she never appeared to have anything more important to attend to if one needed a talk with her. Nothing was resented as an interruption; she almost went out of her way to help people even when they seemed to others to have no real claim upon her. A "succourer of many," quite unsparing of her own trouble, yet always with the tenderest, most gentle tact, and with utter simplicity; the

only question with her was to find some way of helping.

Another striking characteristic was her intense love of perfection in detail. This was noted in a keen and reverent recognition of the exquisite finish to be found in all God's handiwork in nature—a quality which she believed we ought to imitate as far as we can. This raised her care for small things high above pettiness, and made it consonant with large and gracious views, with great designs and soaring ideals. "An angel with feet firmly planted on earth," one of her early friends called her. This careful attention to detail was seen in her own handwriting, with its every letter so carefully formed, yet so rapid and strong; and her trenchant criticisms of the writing in school exercise-books sent in for her inspection will always be remembered by those who heard them. Two lines of a poem by Miss Waring were specially approved by her:

"And careful less to serve God much,
Than to please Him perfectly."

To be trained under her was to learn to care greatly for thoroughness, accuracy, and finish. She abhorred the "rough and ready" almost as much as the slipshod, or the second-best effort. Consequently, for her, "manners" were certainly "not idle." She taught that all girls, through their baptism, were "daughters of the King," and must needs cultivate the gentle bearing and manners of His court, where it is counted the highest honour to do the lowliest service. Reverence was one of the qualities she specially tried to cultivate in her school—the true reverence that is based on humility, and sustained by "recollection"; and her own example led the way in this as in all else that she taught. Prayer gained a new meaning for

many through the awe expressed with such utter sincerity in her voice and manner ; and the sacredness of the Divine Name was implied in the very characters she always employed when writing it. Thus every detail of daily work and duty was vitalised and ennobled to her mind by seeing it always, and quite simply, in the light of its relation to God.

Here indeed we tread on very sacred ground, as we try to reach the heart of her influence ; but if we are to thank God for His gift of her to us, we must not leave this out. For below all the outward charm of her grace and sympathy, even below the disciplined energy of her work, there burned ever the glowing ardour of her hidden life with God. She never spoke of herself : no one could be less self-conscious. But the inner light broke through ; we saw it, and it will ever be a beacon to those who knew her. At the head of a great school, a member of many committees, with a mass of correspondence ever increasing, and an ever-growing number of people wanting to consult her, it was a marvel how she kept undimmed through strain and stress and waning physical strength the spirit of prayer. But habit had been steadily built up by lifelong, loyal obedience to the Church's rule, and it did not fail her in her need. She always used for herself, and loved, the daily Psalms and Lessons ; and no Sunday passed at Worcester without the reading of its poem in *The Christian Year*, usually aloud, to the one or two girls whom she invited by turns to breakfast with her after the early service. These Sunday "breakfasts" were probably some of the happiest of all the opportunities she made for getting to know her children.

From the beginning she tried to teach her school to value midday prayer, by having short prayers—lasting only three or four minutes—in school at the end of every

morning's work. It was often difficult and inconvenient to keep to this, and she was sometimes asked to give it up ; but she never would, for she believed so firmly in its importance. She often said that the whole well-being of the school depended on perseverance in prayer under difficulties. She made much of intercession, both for Missions and also on the occasion of the illness of any child or great friend of the school, when she led them all to go on and on praying, sometimes for weeks, and often with the most marvellous results. Of late years, during Rogation-tide, she encouraged the children to put their own special intercessions into a box, quite privately, and then at school prayers she offered these in Litany form, thus bringing home to them the reality of prayer as nothing else could have done.

Another and much older institution of hers was the "Tennyson tea," as it came to be called—a reading of Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* after a hasty tea with the Sixth Form, on Friday afternoons when the week's work in school was over. This was one of the treasured privileges of the Sixth. Miss Ottley read aloud quite beautifully ;¹ and as she had loved the *Idylls* and their underlying allegory from the time they first came out,

¹ There are many and varied recollections in connexion with Miss Ottley's reading aloud. From a former member of her staff : "Once when she had been delighting us all with her reading of *The Taming of the Shrew*, she shut the book when she came to the end, saying, in the sudden emphatic way she sometimes had, 'A most immoral play!'"

Another recalls "spring days spent among the primroses of the Landslip at Lyme Regis, where she read *Persuasion* aloud to me, with keen amusement at the quaint situations of Miss Austen's heroines."

And to an Old Girl, come memories of her delicious sense of humour, and her enjoyment in reading extracts from Hood's poem *Miss Kilmansegg and her Golden Leg*, in the "after-dinner-hour" at the High School.

her interpretation was illuminating and inspiring in the highest degree.

It was the same with everything that she taught. Her own cultivated and beautiful mind, and her inborn gift of expression, made her lessons always a delight and a stimulus. And she was just as able to charm and interest the little folks in the kindergarten as the elder girls. Her quite uncommon power of sympathy enabled her to put things in the most telling and attractive form. This gift of sympathy ran like a golden thread through all her other gifts and graces, and more than anything else it bound her to those with whom she had to do. Countless instances of it might be given, but space will not permit. One of the earliest of her Worcester "children" writes thus of letters received from her: "They show her tremendous power of sympathy, not only in sorrows, but in joys; she entered into the smallest things, and the advent of a new sister or brother always produced a letter. She was so extraordinarily humble about herself, and never asserted her official side when she came into personal contact with individual girls. Much as one loved and revered her as Head-mistress, one knew at the same time that she was always a very real friend."

Closely connected with this was another feature in Miss Ottley's influence, which everyone felt who came under it. She inspired people to do their best, because she always believed they would do it. The same writer who was quoted just now continues: "I think what George Eliot says in *Middlemarch* applies to her so well: 'There are natures in which, if they love us, we are conscious of having a sort of baptism and consecration; they bind us over to a rectitude and purity by their pure belief about us, and our sins become the worst kind of sacrilege which tears down the invisible altar of trust.'

Hers was such a high standard that there were times when one almost shrank away from it in despair: she made one so thoroughly ashamed of everything that was not the very best." And another, long after leaving school, said: "One simply *can't do*, even now, the things Miss Ottley said ought not to be done." And another writes: "I hardly ever think of her without remembering how she taught us to try to walk 'worthy of our vocation.' That thought seemed to be in all her serious talks to us."

This brings forward another point connected with her influence—her strong views about the vocation of teaching. She could not bear to have it spoken of as a "profession." In her eyes it was a most sacred vocation. As one of the original members of the Society of the Holy Name, and afterwards, to the day of her death, as its loved and honoured Superior, she greatly helped to foster a deeper devotion to God the Holy Spirit, and a stronger sense of His vocation, among teachers engaged in higher education throughout the English Church. And this same reverence for the Divine call made her treat even young and inexperienced mistresses—and insist on the children treating them too—as persons to whom God had delegated some of His own authority. "*He* is the Head-Master of this school," was one of her sayings. This principle, with its twofold aspect—the high honour and the great responsibility—was one of the things that most stimulated and braced the young students who in the later years of Miss Ottley's headship came into the Training Department which she organised. There is not room to describe in any detail the help which she was always giving to these and to the members of her staff, but one instance may stand for much: On being shown an examination paper on the theory of education, in which a question was set,

on how to deal with specified cases of unruly children, she tossed the paper aside, exclaiming, "Why, my dear, of course the answer is, 'Love them.'"

No sketch, however brief, would give a true picture of Miss Ottley which did not mention her intense love of nature. To be with her on a holiday expedition in the country, or in Switzerland or Italy, was an experience never to be forgotten. Her joy in planning the tour beforehand was buoyed up by her characteristic optimism. "It is too good not to come true," was always her way of looking forward. She simply loved mountains and flowers and the sheer physical joy of walking and climbing, in which for many years she used to tire out much younger companions. And yet she was just as ready, on a hopelessly wet day, to read aloud or to paint her flowers; nothing ever came amiss when she was travelling. She made friends among the people wherever she went, for she could talk equally charmingly in French, German, or Italian. She knew Florence and Rome and some other Italian cities well, and loved showing them to some young friend whom she was taking there for the first time, and, as one of these truly says, she had "A way of telling one things without the least giving the impression that she was lecturing or being instructive; she let remarks drop, as it were, from which one could learn."

Much more might be said about Miss Ottley's many-sided work, and of her brilliant mental gifts, her eloquence, her power as an organiser, her social charm. We have only been trying here to realise what it was that knit all these gifts and graces together in the wonderful personality for whom we thank God, and we have only one more touch to add—the strangely "fitting" close of her life-work. It was given to her, as it is to so few, to see the completed organisation of all the

schemes which her busy brain planned for her school. Very, very slowly they matured ; often she waited long and patiently for obstacles to be removed, or means to be found ; but little by little the school buildings grew to completeness, with all their equipment ; the departments of work developed from kindergarten to the preparation of students for the Cambridge Teacher's Diploma. The Bursary fund, intended to help needy scholars, was at length placed on a sound footing : a boarding-house was secured for the school. Then, and not sooner, the frail body, so long overtaxed, broke down ; but she still had strength enough to resign the Head-mistress-ship, and, in spite of great weakness, to wind up every thread of her school affairs, and give all possible helpful information to the successor whom she so confidently welcomed. And then, on the very day on which her beloved school began the new chapter of its history, she laid down her life and went to her great reward. No wonder that " Her children rise up and call her blessed."

A.M.D.G.

APPENDIX

LETTERS

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TO THE GUILD, ON READING

No. I (1893).

MY DEAR CHILDREN (for so I must call you still, having regard, not to your age, but to the relation once established between us),—Now that you are scattered widely, and many of you will rarely, if ever, be able to come to Guild meetings, I propose to use the Magazine as our regular channel of communication ; and through it to answer such questions of members as seem to me of more than individual interest.

As regards reading ; the lists of books sent in by Guild girls,—many of them excellent, all more or less satisfactory,—suggested some thoughts which I purpose to formulate under three heads—religious reading, intellectual reading, and recreative reading ; not that there is any hard and fast line of severance between these three, nor that they are mutually exclusive, but they form convenient starting-points.

To deal first with the last named. In some of the lists

fiction predominated too largely, there was too much butter for the bread ; in some the fiction was not well chosen.

I take for granted that no Guild girl reads story-books in the morning, for that, except in illness, is wrong, and even then generally not advisable. There are other forms of recreative reading less likely to pall, books every whit as charming and enthralling as the best novels, infinitely more so than the average tale ; and I strongly recommend rapid readers, whose excuse for consuming so much whipped cream is that it is so light that they swallow a vast quantity in a short time, to try the cream unwhipped—to read tales of life in fact instead of in fiction. For pathos or for soul-stirring incident, Prescott's *Conquest of Peru and Mexico*, Freeman's *Normandy*, Motley's *Dutch Republic* ; while for gentle, restful thought, opening our eyes to the loveliness and the splendour around us, White's *Natural History of Selborne*, Richard Jeffries' *By Field and Hedgerow*, &c., any of Procter's or Miss Giberne's books, Darwin's *Earthworms*, Lubbock's *Pleasures of Life*, and, of course, any of Ruskin's works—nay, the list is endless of books that are recreative ; to say nothing of the whole realm of poetry, from Chaucer to Tennyson.

But the novel has its place in mental culture : it shows us life as looked upon by other minds ; only be careful that you never read a novel unworthy of a Guild girl, *i.e.* of one who has a high standard, moral and intellectual ; there are abundance of books to occupy the whole of the novel-reading hours of your natural life without your ever touching a doubtful or a feeble one.

There are writers whom it is better not to read, because they take us into bad or low company, but so long as they make us loathe the evil and love the good they are not immoral ; it is when we are forced into friendly intimacy with people whom, it is to be hoped, we should refuse to know if we met them in the world, that we are right to be indignant, and not to allow ourselves to be taken by such writers into the society they frequent.

First, then, read such authors as will lead you into good company ; and secondly, try that they be writers whose style will bear criticism ; such as is at least simple, lucid, straightforward and free from vulgarisms, as far removed

as possible from such sickening twaddle as *Molly Bawn* and all its tribe.

But further, why should we not sometimes take a French, German, or Italian story as recreative reading? To minds a little weary and jaded, a well-written foreign book carries some of the peculiar exhilaration we are conscious of, when we find ourselves on the other side of the Channel, or first come in sight of the Alps or the Alban Hills.

True, it is dangerous to read French books without good guidance, but this is generally to be had; and there is a delicious piquancy and delicacy in the fun of French writers, which I venture to think no other nation can approach.

German stories are perhaps apt to be a little insipid in their sentimentality, but their rather dreamy mysticism is at least a refreshing change from the hard realities of life. In Italy have been produced some of the very best novels, from early days down to our own time, and the beauty of the language enhances the enjoyment of the book.

All this concerns reading for the afternoon or evening; as to more serious mental work I hope to say something in the next Magazine.—I am, yours affectionately,

ALICE OTTLEY.

No. II (1894).

MY DEAR CHILDREN,—Having begun at the wrong end, with the lightest sort of reading, I will try now to answer some of the questions that have arisen as to the more serious kind, which may be called "study."

These are mainly reducible to two: (1) What to read. (2) How to take notes.

As to the first, there is such an *embarras de richesses*,—such vast fields of "the knowable" stretch out on all sides of us, that it is indeed difficult to give any definite counsel.

But a wiser than we are, long ago faced the difficulty; and although it has increased a hundredfold since his day, Bacon's method is still the only one whereby to meet it.

Some of you have read—more, I hope, will read—the *Advancement of Learning*, and know how he bids the student look out into the learnable, and, having first equipped himself with the needful instruments by the cultivation of his intellectual faculties, choose that portion of the great field

of study towards which the bias of his mind inclines, and there work, first mastering the known, and then going on to the (as yet) unexplored, and so adding somewhat to the conquered territory.

Although most of us may never attain to this further advance, we may all follow the advice as to the choice of subjects for study.

If your school-life has not been intellectually a failure, it has done two things for you : (1) It has taught you how to learn ; (2) It has opened the doors of many chambers of knowledge, and enabled you to judge into which of them all you desire now to enter.

Classics, Mathematics, History, Science, Literature, Art—you know enough about each to be able to say “ this is,” and “ this is not, for me.”

Not that I would have you uninterested in any, but you cannot really cultivate all, certainly not all at the same time ; so choose definitely : (1) Such as are congenial to you ; (2) Such as you have the means of pursuing further ; (3) Such as will be of use to you in your life and work.

But secondly, I was asked “ how to take notes.”

I am glad that you should assume, as a matter of course, that notes must be taken ; glad too that you feel that ordinary school methods will not now suffice.

First, have a definite unity of sequence in your reading, and this will guide you as to the kind of notes you should take : *e.g.* suppose your subject to be History, you can take a century, or a country, or a department of history.

In either case you must have a large note-book ; make a margin for dates, and then divide the pages into columns ; if you are studying a *century*, each column will represent a country, and you will note chief events in each, so that they run on in parallel sequence.

If it be *one country*, the columns will be—one for the political events, one for foreign events which affect it, one for great persons, one for literary works, one for religious and social movements, &c. Five or six columns are generally enough, and their contents would vary according to the period you are studying.

If you take a department, such as the development of political institutions, or of literature, your columns would

again be for different countries, and this is especially suggestive, as you observe how thought acts and reacts between one and another. In any case, let biography go with your history ; make the personal acquaintance of the great men and women whose names you meet.

And again, read *books*, not reviews of books or articles about books ; know your author at first hand.

In a study of art, whether music or painting, the plan must of course be different ; much time must be given to acquiring technical skill ; only do not let this be all. Try to get at the heart of the great master ; do not learn to play a sonata until you have first studied its composition—the reason of the sequence of its parts, the manner of its modulations—and below this again, find out, if you can, the thought (often too deep for words) it is intended to express. There is a real and terrible danger in these days of a worship of the outer form, to the exclusion of a reverent study of the inner spirit.

In painting this is more fatal still ; delicacy of feeling and purity of thought are too often sacrificed to mere sensuous beauty ; and this is called “ high art.”

Dear girls, I pray you believe it, *no* art is high but that which expresses high, pure, noble thought, and never be misled to admire on canvas what would be shocking to your womanly instinct in real life.

Read the lives of artists, find out the aim of their work, realise the surroundings of their lives, and you will understand their pictures better, and be better able to know whether you should sit at their feet and strive to learn what they can teach, or should rather mourn over that which may well make angels weep—the misuse of God-given genius.

Science is a field so vast, and so rapidly becoming vaster, that I dare only indicate very general principles.

(1) Be *accurate* as far as you go in any science. (2) Let reading and observation, as far as possible, be used to verify each other, and to this end choose such sciences as you have the means of studying from observation.

(3) Come to the study of Nature in a very reverent spirit, for it is, above all other studies, the revelation of God in His works.—I am, yours affectionately,

ALICE OTTLEY.

No. III (1894).

MY DEAR CHILDREN,—I resume the sequence of thoughts on Reading, with the most important, and perhaps most difficult branch of the subject, religious reading. This may, I think, be classed under three heads: (1) Devotional reading, (2) Theology, and (3) Church History with Biography.

And first of devotional reading: how much time, or rather what proportion of our time, should be given to it?

We must be guided to an answer by realising that our inner being is complex; that every part of it needs sustenance; and that, therefore, as the physical and the mental, so also the spiritual powers will fail, unless they are constantly nourished with fresh matter.

True, there can be no hard and fast line drawn between the exercise of the intellectual and of the spiritual faculties in the assimilation of such matter; yet there is a definite provision of the aliment needed for the support of our spiritual life; God Himself has given us a Literature for this distinct purpose, and has bidden us use it—"Search the Scriptures."

This being so, we need not stop to prove that there must be daily, not mere reading, but *study* of that Holy Book, by which God trains our *spiritual* faculties to worship Him as He wills to be worshipped—the Book which is God's revelation to us of the facts forming the data of the highest science our *minds* can approach, the knowledge of God, Theology—the Book which lays down the true philosophy of *history*.

Never think that any other books, however good, can take the place of the Bible itself, or that It can be approached and understood exactly as other books can. It is supernatural in its object and in its subject, and can only be apprehended by souls illuminated by the Holy Spirit of God.

But there are many other books which help us to a better understanding of It; for the living Voice of the Church teaches through all the ages. Only one warning here: in choosing books for devotional reading, you who are Communicants of the Church of England, be loyal and true to the Church of your baptism.

Do not yield to the fashion of using modern Roman books

of devotion, which have a certain attractiveness for weak and emotional natures, but are wholly unreal to any healthy English mind ; nay, are repulsive to true and honest souls even in the Roman Communion. Here is what a living Frenchman, a devout Catholic layman, says about them : " Dans la plupart de ces ouvrages (où trop souvent manque le sucre de la sagesse), les vérités éternelles, et les vrais enseignements évangéliques, ne tardent pas à être délayés, et comme perdus, dans les eaux étrangères ; doctrines individuelles ou collectives, considérations ascétiques ou mystiques, règles de piété, méthodes, moyens, procédés de perfection, et oraisons de toute sorte. Plusieurs sont absolument navrants par leur étroitesse de conception, par leurs idées fausses, ou leur absence d'idées ; par leur entière ignorance ;—ignorance du monde réel, ignorance du cœur humain, ignorance des véritables voies de DIEU.

" Les uns comme les autres, les meilleurs comme les lamentables, sont tout autre chose, oui, absolument autre chose que l'Évangile, dont ils ont, par un envahissement insensible—nous allions dire clandestin—usurpé sans bruit la mission apostolique."

Would it not be fatuous of us English Catholics to accept this garbage as our spiritual food ?

Choose then such books as you yourselves personally can assimilate ; do not blindly take what even your best friend suggests, but take care that your choice shall be limited to what is sound in doctrine and healthy in tone. I would mention a few, out of very many writers, whom you may wholly trust, as exponents of the Church's teaching : Archbishop Trench, Canon Liddon, Isaac Williams, Bishop Lightfoot, Mr. Sadler, Dr. Hook, Dr. Edersheim, Miss Yonge, Miss Sewell.

I must leave the other two kinds of religious reading for the next Magazine, but in the meantime I want to press one thought upon you.

Are you using Sunday for this its legitimate purpose ? Do you try and keep your mind in tune for its high and holy use, by laying aside altogether other kinds of books, and keeping your thoughts as far as possible on spiritual things ?

Surely, surely, the few spare hours of Sunday are not too

much to give to the training of that highest part of our being which we too often neglect.

You are too old now for the Sunday story-book, you *know* that the novel dissipates your mind and unfits it for worship ; God gives you this day, not for puritanical Sabbatarianism, but yet not for self-indulgence ; it is His Holy Day ; and if the stern outward restrictions of the Jewish Sabbath are removed, it is that the day may be given to Him " in spirit and in truth."

Believe me, you will gain immensely in real spiritual power, if you resolve bravely that Sunday shall be " the Lord's Day," in the spirit of George Herbert :

" The Sundaies of man's life,
Thredded together on time's string,
Make bracelets to adorn the wife
Of the eternall glorious King.
On Sunday, heaven's gate stands ope ;
Blessings are plentiful and rife,
More plentiful than hope."

Your affectionate ALICE OTTLEY.

No. IV (1895).

MY DEAR CHILDREN,—First, may I take this opportunity of thanking the many ' old girls ' who have sent me a beautiful tea-basket, suggestive of delightful times of foreign travel, for their very kind thought and present ; and then shortly recur to the subject of religious reading in the two branches of Theology and Church History.

Pope has told us that " the proper study of mankind is man " ; may we not say, rather, " the proper study of mankind is GOD " : GOD as He wills to reveal to us those laws of His Eternal Being which we could never discover, and which can only be apprehended by minds illuminated by His Holy Spirit ? The word " dogma " repels many people, but if we approach it seriously and reverently, we must find it of surpassing interest ; and moreover, it will correct the tendency to have a merely emotional religion, which is so great a danger.

To study Theology is to lay our intellect at the foot of the Cross, and so to " be able to give a reason for the hope that is

in us"; and you will be rewarded a thousandfold if you thus acquire backbone in your faith.

If any of you will really master Butler's *Analogy* and Books I and V of Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, you will form habits of thought which will be unspeakably valuable.

Then you will be prepared to enjoy Canon Liddon's *Elements of Religion* and his *Bampton Lectures*, and all the delightful writings of Dean Church, Archbishop Trench, Dr. J. B. Mozley, and many others.

In the wealth of such literature as our English Divines have produced, selection is almost impossible in a limited space; but for those who want a clear and simple statement of that which we believe, Canon Mason's *Faith of the Gospel*, and Miss Wordsworth's *Illustrations of the Creed*, are most helpful.

When we come to Church history and biography, an immense field again lies before us, but it is one that we are bound to enter upon. It is ennobling to read the wondrous story, which, opening in the Acts of the Apostles, continues through the ages, and unites us in unbroken continuity with those who sat at the Master's feet and learned from His own lips His scheme for carrying on His own Work.

It is not enough to read *English Church history*; we should try to get some knowledge of the earlier days of the Fathers of the Church, when the battle of the Creed was fought and won, and lives were laid down in its defence; and of the continuous growth and development in which, by the Divine power within the Church, She assimilated all that was best and noblest in philosophy and in art, changed the face of the world, directed the march of civilisation, purified society, and through times of persecution without, and of heresy within, when the tares almost concealed the wheat, She yet held, and continues to hold, on Her way, in obedience to Her "marching orders"—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." For general Church history, the following books are useful:

Cheetham's *History of the Christian Church*,
Canon Bright's *Waymarks in Church History*,
Trench's *Lectures on Mediæval Church History*,
Cutts' *Turning Points of Church History*,

and for English Church History :

Perry's *Students' English Church History*,
 Canon Bright's *Early English Church History*,
 Wakeman's *History of Religion in England*,
 Bishop Lightfoot's *Leaders of the Northern Church*,
 Cutts' *Turning Points of English Church History*.

As the formation of individual Christian character is one function of the Church, biography is an essential part of Her history ; and naturally, records of holy lives abound which illustrate each stage of Her development and every part of Her work. Such are *The Fathers for English readers* : Canon Stephens' *Life of S. Chrysostom*, Miss Yonge's *Disciples of S. John*, Kingsley's *The Hermits*, &c. Our own time has been singularly rich in such memoirs, which are far too numerous even to name, but there are a few which everyone should read without fail. Such are *Walton's Lives*, and the lives of Mrs. Schimmelpeninck, Mrs. Godolphin, Commodore Goodenough, General Gordon, Bishop Patteson, Bishop Mackenzie, Dr. Hook, Rev. J. Keble, Rev. I. Williams, Rev. C. Kingsley, Dr. Arnold, Ellen Watson, Annie Keary, and most charming perhaps of all, Dean Church.

But the more one tries to write of books, the more inexhaustible the subject becomes, and it is simply amazing that, with such a mine of treasure close at hand, people should care to stuff their minds with the worthless rubbish which forms the staple of the reading of many women and not a few men.

Let me hope that Worcester High School girls will have altogether a higher standard, and will maintain it, not only for themselves, but wherever their influence shall be felt in after life.—I am, yours affectionately,

ALICE OTTLEY.

TO OLD GIRLS WHO ARE YOUNG MOTHERS

No. I (1895).

MY DEAR CHILDREN,—I have been asked this time to write especially to those of my "Old Girls" who are young mothers, about the very early training of their tiny ones,

and I do so with the less scruple, because I think few people can have known very intimately, and loved very dearly, more babies than I have, or can have seen more of the after results of both good and bad nursery training.

First, I pray you to realise that the whole future of your child depends in large measure upon those precious years before it is seven, those years when it is all your own, to mould and, in the truest sense, to educate, in body, soul, and spirit.

It is a responsibility so tremendous that you may well tremble to meet it ; your only hope is that when you received back from the font the new-born " Member of Christ, child of GOD, inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven," it was not only " called to be a saint," but a seed was sown in it which, duly watered and tended, will grow into the saintly character ; it is yours to see that all the influences around it shall be such as will help and not hinder *this* growth.

But you will say that this is stating, not meeting, the difficulty. True, but to face it is the first step to conquering it ; you cannot think of your baby as a mere doll to amuse yourself with, or to dress up in fine clothes and show off to your friends, if you see in it this latent sanctity ; if you recognise that it has been given to you by the King to " nurse for " Him.

Perhaps the most convenient and practical way of dealing with such a large subject is to consider nursery training as it concerns (1) the body, (2) the soul, and (3) the spirit ; or in other words the physical, mental and moral, and spiritual development of the little child.

Do not scorn to think much of that beautiful little body which depends wholly on you for its feeding, clothing, and developing. Nothing else will go well if the physical welfare is neglected ; a baby *must* be " cross " if it has " got a pain " ; poor little mite, nature makes it let you know of the pain just by this crossness ; but best is to avoid the pain and the " crossness " altogether by being most careful as to the quality and quantity of its food. I am not going to write a treatise on infant dietary, but I am sure many young mothers do not realise the exceeding importance of having their babies' food carefully prepared, of exactly the right consistency and the right warmth, and given at the right

times and in the right quantities. Small puppies and kittens are saved by their instinct and do not swallow more than they can digest, but human babies are often at the mercy of ignorant young nurses, who go on stuffing them with stodgy food because they are crying—probably from repletion! I wonder how many young mothers have any idea how small a thing a baby's stomach is, or how easily they may overload it! But when real babyhood is past and little lips can ask for what they wish for, other thoughts enter into the question of food.

I rejoice that the Head-master of Haileybury, Dr. Lyttelton (whose delightful book I hope every mother will not only read but possess and study), has devoted a whole chapter to food. The dangers he sees for bigger boys are present in nursery days, and can then be met and overcome more easily than later.

Let the children's food be thoroughly nice (as children count niceness), but always plain and simple, and like Chaucer's *Doctour of Phisik*, "of gret norishing and digestible." But then, have no eating at odd times, or eating of other people's food! I do not know a worse thing for little children than "coming down to dessert," with their small heads full of their own smart clothes, or of their hopes of getting unwholesome dainties off grown people's plates. Giving "something to eat" (or to suck!) is a bad sort of reward; giving children what they beg for, or tease for, is the worst kind of spoiling—and spoiling is just the wickedest, cruellest, most selfish thing any mother can do. I shall return to this, and only touch upon it here because I have known a mother give her little boy of two an apple because he cried for it, though she knew it would make him ill! and another who let her delicate little children eat nuts and pickles because they fancied them! Decide with great thought and care what you know is right and good for them; so far as possible, let it be what you know they like, but never let them look round the table and choose for themselves. There is a bad habit children often get of asking for something to drink at all hours of the day; unless there is exceptional reason for it, it should not be allowed; turn their thoughts to something better, and they will soon forget they are thirsty.

With regard to clothes, we live in better times than our "forbears"; children's dress is more rational, and more comfortable, and prettier than it was in our childhood; but though we have left Watts' Hymns, with their quaint warnings against vanity, behind, there still remains, in most little *girls'* natures at least, a certain tendency which needs watchfulness; on its best side it is simply a love of the beautiful, but perverted it may be the beginning of self-consciousness and self-conceit which will be a misery in later years. Do let your babies be babies, just this once in their lives; do not turn them into little "misses," with the airs and graces of pigmy women, by teaching them to think about how they look! It would be ridiculous, if it were not so pitiful, to see tiny children acting the part of men and women of the world and becoming "blasés" at six years old.

Was ever any little child happier or better for going to a dance or for acting in theatricals? I believe every mother's heart will answer "no." Then let us have the courage of our opinions and keep our sweet flower-buds in the lovely spring freshness, which, once lost in the glare of excitement, or withered by the blasting breath of worldliness, can never return.

You can make for them, at home, simple and healthful pleasures which will leave no fretfulness of reaction behind, and involve no late hours, no loss of the quiet sleep which is absolutely needful to the little excitable brains and eager spirits; and besides, you will save yourself many a heart-ache in years to come if your children learn to find their happiness at home, and not to seek it restlessly in excitement which creates a craving that is never satisfied.

But I must stop here, and hope, if it may be, to say something as to mental and moral training another time.—Ever your affectionate

ALICE OTTLEY.

No. II (1896).

MY DEAR CHILDREN,—Strictly, I ought to write next of the intellectual training of very little children, but this term is so nearly coincident with Lent, when our thoughts are naturally turned specially to spiritual things, that it seems to be rather the fitting moment to dwell on the early de-

velopment of that highest part of your little child, its spirit : that by which it can receive and respond to religious impressions.

It is very difficult to say how soon a baby can be taught anything about God, for this capacity, like others, differs greatly in different children ; but the facility with which it accepts such teaching is proverbial. We are all in the best attitude towards revealed truth when we approach it "as a little child" does.

Everything in this strange, new world is so wonderful ; there is no sense of proportion, or of one thing being more difficult to believe than another ; and the germ of spiritual discernment has been implanted by the "new birth," so that as soon as the little mind can perceive what is good and beautiful, so soon it can be taught that its Father in Heaven made all these good and beautiful things, and that it must thank Him for them.

As soon as it wants and tries to be good, it can learn that HE can make *it* good, and can begin to ask Him to help it. The first little prayers cannot be too simple if they are to be real : "Jesus, tender Shepherd, teach me to love THEE and thank THEE every day," or some such words. And always before and after meals, standing, with closed eyes and folded hands, it can learn to thank "God." Very early also little hymns can be taught and said, and very soon also sung, by the tiny children. There are many lovely ones in the *Children's Hymn-book* collected by Mrs. Carey Brock. The Lord's Prayer should not be learnt until it can be explained, and that cannot be, at earliest, before a child is six or seven years old.

But the first great thing to teach the little child is the *spirit* of worship—Reverence. From the very first, the mother should *kneel down* with her child, make him kneel reverently—without leaning or lounging—fold his tiny hands, bow his little head, and thus learn to feel "God" is here, listening. It is a privilege every mother should keep for herself—this leading her God-given treasures to Him for Whom she is training them. She, and she alone, will feel how soon she may lead them further, to confess their little faults, to pray for father, mother, sisters, brothers, and nurse, never going beyond their tender strength ; she will know when

she may leave them to pray alone, and can advise them as to their prayers at morning, midday, and evening ; they cannot do without such direction, if a life-habit of devotion is to be formed.

So too with the study of their Bibles. At first the Bible story, simply told, which a child of four can follow and love, especially with the help of really good, reverent pictures, which impress a child's mind more readily than words ; then, gradually, the privilege of reading out of its own Bible, always handling the book reverently, and with prayer for the enlightening of the Holy Spirit, and then the daily reading by itself. Of course all this only concerns private prayer ; the question of coming to family prayers and of going to Church rests on other grounds ; but if the time be not so long as to weary the child, it seems to me good that it should be present when others worship, even although it cannot yet join with understanding in the service, always making this a privilege, to be withdrawn if it behaves badly or disturbs others. I think there is a great danger in working on the emotional side which is so easily excited in a child's nature ; a preternatural hot-bed sort of religion, very early developed, is pretty sure to be followed sooner or later by a terrible reaction—a positive repulsion, which is disastrous in any case, and may be fatal in its consequences.

I believe all "Old Girls" read their Keble every Sunday and Saint's day ; I hope all who have anything to do with children, and "Young Mothers" especially, will read their *Lyra Innocentium* also. Nothing can better express the spirit of the Church on the devotional life of a child.—I am ever your affectionate

ALICE OTTLEY.

No. III (1896).

MY DEAR CHILDREN,—We must now come to the intellectual training of the tiny ones, and of this what I have to say is, I fear, rather vague and to a great extent negative ; *i.e.* I want chiefly to warn you to avoid the dire mistake of thinking that a second-best teacher will do for very young children. They want the very best that can be had, for they are forming now the habits which will cling to them and never be wholly eradicated.

First, be very careful that they hear only pure and well-pronounced English. They learn at first wholly by imitation ; let them hear nothing you would not wish them to imitate ; and from the beginning insist that they speak accurately and finish their words distinctly ; half the trouble of learning to spell would be avoided if children were made to enunciate clearly. Little children *will* always be learning something, for observation and memory are both active ; our part is chiefly to direct the power of observation and store the memory with what is good and beautiful, so it is of infinite importance that a little child's first teachers should be thoroughly refined gentlewomen, whom it may safely observe and whom you would like it to resemble.

Teaching to read is only exercising these two faculties in a special direction ; a child must *observe* the form of the letters and *remember* the sounds they represent ; and this can be begun very early, provided that its little brain is not taxed to fix its attention for more than a very few minutes at a time ; very short and infinitely varied lessons will be a pleasure and no strain, and there need be no sharp line between lessons and play ; the really cruel thing is to expect the child to be good when it has nothing to do.

Mischief is simply the natural activity of the eager little soul and busy little fingers which must do something, and it is our fault if we do not provide scope for the exercise of their faculties. The nurse, the teacher, the mother who says to a child " don't," is asking an impossibility ; it must be " doing " all the time, and we are bound to show it what to do, not to tell it what *not* to do.

Any sort of handiwork which shall give it the pleasure of producing something, is good : writing, drawing, painting, paper-plaiting and pricking, easy sewing and knitting ; where it is possible, gardening—all these and many other employments may be planned, and are, in the best sense, educative.

Again, remember that although imagination is very strong in little children, they have no power of abstraction ; it is quite impossible for them to understand that three times four make twelve, but perfectly easy to count three sets of four marbles and to find out that there are twelve, and then that the twelve will also make exactly six sets of two,

and so on, until they thoroughly grasp the principles of arithmetic, but always in the concrete.

And so with foreign languages ; very little ones can begin to learn the names of things in French or German, and to say simple sentences, provided that they have a real meaning to them, but here again it is of infinite importance that they should hear only the purest accent, and never be allowed to pronounce incorrectly.

In all teaching of little children we must try to get down to their level, and not expect them to see from ours ; one only exception I think there is to this rule : they may sometimes learn by heart things which they can only partially understand at present ; *e.g.* poetry, the Church Catechism, the very words of Scripture, may be stored with absolute accuracy in the young memory, and become a life-long possession, although only in after years will the fulness of the meaning grow into the "form of sound words" ; for memory develops much more quickly than the logical faculty, and it is good for the child to put forth the effort of exercising it. For such effort, rewards may be given, whereas to reward a child for obedience is absolutely demoralising ; but this is a matter which enters on another subject, *viz.* the moral training, and that I must leave for next term's letter.—I am ever your affectionate

ALICE OTTLEY.

No. IV (1896).

MY DEAR CHILDREN,—I have left to the last the consideration of by far the most important part of a mother's work for her little child—*i.e.* the direct moral training ; the laying down the lines upon which character is to be built up ; the formation of that "ego" which will constitute, not in this life only, but through all the unthinkable Eternity beyond, the personality of that soul which is now plastic in your hand. It is an awful, overwhelming responsibility, impossible to be met but by the aid of that Spirit Whose gifts of "Counsel and ghostly Strength" are yours by virtue of your Confirmation, and can be "stirred up" to meet your daily need by daily prayer.

For it is day by day, and hour by hour, that the practical need arises ; very gentle but unvarying pressure in the

right direction will bend the twig as the tree should grow, and while your child is very little is your opportunity. What then are the bases of character which you can lay down in nursery days? Three main ones, I think: Obedience, Reverence, Unselfishness. In this, as in all else, the main factor in producing the results is the impress of your own character; what *you are*, that your child will tend to become, not only from the mysterious power of heredity, but from constant, unconscious imitation.

Successfully to train a child in obedience, its parents need perpetual self-discipline and self-control; you must never give commands that are unreasonable, hasty, contradictory, but once having said a thing is to be done or not done, you must make the child obey at all costs, and allow no coaxing or begging to move you; and never bribe it to obey you or reward it for obeying;—this is only a form of spoiling, and there is no being on earth so pitiable as a spoilt child. Disliked by everyone except its foolish and selfish mother, it grows up to expect what it will never get, and, unless her bad work is undone, it will be to the end that most miserable creature, an unloved, because unlovable, man or woman.

Let the habit of instant, unquestioning obedience to yourself, *and to all whom you put in authority over your child*, be formed from the moment it can understand the difference between being good and being naughty, and you will have done much to ensure it a happy life here and hereafter. It is a pregnant saying that “No obedient soul was ever lost, and no disobedient soul was ever saved.”

Closely connected with this is the kindred virtue, so sadly lacking in much of the education of to-day, the absence of which is so unpleasing and alarming a characteristic of much modern literature, and of only too many *fin-de-siècle* young people—Reverence. This is specially a tone of mind which is acquired unconsciously, by infection and imitation; it should be the atmosphere in which the child's moral life develops, and it is in the power of parents to create it, if, and only if, the habit of their own mind is one of an awed humility, springing from the consciousness of the Presence of God. In this, perhaps, more than in all besides, *example* is the determining factor; a child imitates the gestures and demeanour of its elders at all times, and if it sees grown-up

people lounging in church or at prayers, or hears unseemly criticisms of others, the very foundations of reverence are destroyed. But further, children can easily be taught to be quiet and respectful in the presence of grown-up people, and never to be self-assertive or bold in manner, or to force themselves into notice; and this respect to those above them will train them in an attitude of reverence in higher things; [for to a child, in its very early days, its parents really represent God, and its reverence or irreverence, obedience or disobedience to you, are surely forming its habit of mind towards the great Fatherhood of which your relation to it is the chosen type.

Harder, perhaps, to inculcate than either Obedience or Reverence, is Unselfishness, especially so, we are told, in the case of a boy; all the more important then to lose no time in training him in that which, above all else perhaps, constitutes the difference between the future good or bad man—the living for self, or the living for others.

As early as possible teach your little ones the joy of giving, not of getting; let them give what they really value—not their broken toys, their discarded books, but the thing they like best—for the sake of gladdening a little sick child. Let them go without some luxury that they may have, to give to a hungry child; teach your little girls to spend time and trouble on making clothes, your little boys on making toys or scrap-books, for children poorer than themselves;—and we shall no longer have the cynical definition of Charity, "Giving away what you don't want," nor find men and women who think nothing too good for themselves to have, and anything good enough for other people.

Do not let them give money unless they have earned it;—it is an unreality, and may even be a subtle form of ministering to self-gratification and conceit; but effort made, and pleasant things foregone, for the sake of others whom they can really know and see, are seeds of habit that will grow into fruit-bearing plants of generosity and self-sacrifice, which will bring forth a rich harvest, in after years, of the lovingness and lovable-ness which make the only true happiness of life. But in vain do we talk of unselfishness unless we are practising it; children are keen to see unreality, and if we lap ourselves in luxury and self-indulgence, and are

content to give what we shall never miss, we are creating an atmosphere that must stifle the self-sacrifice we strive to inculcate.

The next generation will have to meet an even more acute form of the social question than confronts us now, and how it shall be met depends largely on the mothers of to-day.

Little hearts are loving and generous before the world has chilled and hardened them, and you can give them truest joy by letting them share with you, real thought and care for others, planning for the good, the happiness, the pleasure of anyone rather than of themselves; and the perfectly safe, because perfectly Christian, spirit of communism will be engendered, in which all are eager to give all that they have, and none shall say that anything he "possesses is his own"—not even themselves, for "ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price."

Yes, in all moral training we must come back to the sanctions of Religion, for what does it mean? First, the development of the ethical faculty by which the mind recognises the distinction between right and wrong; and secondly, the bringing the will to act in accordance with the right; therefore the Moral can never be separated from the Spiritual on the one side, nor from the Intellectual on the other: for what is Right but simply the Will of God? which we can only *discern* when our conscience is illuminated by the HOLY GHOST, and have no power to *do* but by His indwelling might.

That you may be enabled by that Blessed SPIRIT for the high and holy vocation of Motherhood, is the prayer of your affectionate

ALICE OTTLEY.

ON GRUMBLERS AND GRIEVANCES.

(1899)

There are a good many people in the world who are never happy unless they have a "grievance," which is tantamount to saying that they do not know how to be happy at all; for a "person with a grievance" is only a euphemism for a grumbler, *i.e.* a person who lives in a perennial moral fog, which prevents the sunshine of pure joy from reaching him-

self, and besides, damps and chills everyone who comes near him.

Now grievances doubtless exist, and may be classified under two heads—the real and the imaginary ; of which the latter is incomparably the more numerous class ; but they have this advantage over the former, that if you express them in words or even look straight at them,

“ They softly and silently vanish away,
For the Snark is a Boojum, you see.”

A real grievance is an undeniable wrong which might be put right by someone, who refuses to put it right.

Test your grievances by this definition, and see what becomes of most of them.

To take concrete instances of more or less common causes of grumbling :

1. The roads are so muddy I cannot ride my bicycle ;
 2. The summer term is too long ;
 3. The cake is heavy, or the pudding is too sweet ;
 4. Whitsuntide falls so early ;
 5. Someone I love, loves someone else ;
 6. Another girl is always praised and I am not ;
- and so on, and so on, *ad libitum*.

Are not most of them Boojums ?

But there may remain now and then a positive evil that demands a remedy ; what are you to do then ? First, frankly, respectfully, courteously, go straight to the person who can remove it, and only when he or she has refused to do so, may you claim to be the proud possessor of the genuine article—a real grievance ! What will you do with it ? Will you hug it to your bosom, talk of it to your friends, groan, growl, grizzle, and grumble over it ? If so, it will thrive amazingly, and grow so large and heavy that at last you will hardly be able to bear it ; and soon it will rob you of all your good temper and brightness, and probably make other folk around you miserable as well as yourself. But if you refuse to cherish it, if you treat it with the contempt it deserves, never look at it or speak of it, resolve to be happy in spite of it, the chances are that it will die of inanition.

For evils that we honestly cannot remove or remedy are not to us evils at all; they are God's instruments of discipline by which our corners are to be rubbed off and our characters perfected. Nay they have a higher use still; they are the means of union with Him Who endured "the contradiction of sinners against Himself." In Lent we sing hymns about "bearing the Cross" and welcoming trials for Christ's sake: let us take care that this is not mere "cant," which it certainly is if we allow ourselves to complain of the things which are not pleasant to us.

After all, it is mere self-love, self-pity, which expresses itself thus; if only we were thinking wholly of others, and not at all of our selfish selves, we should make light of whatever affects ourselves alone, and should heartily strive to shed brightness around us, by being cheery and contented, and by making the best of the inevitable.

Sometimes indeed there are graver sins underlying the fretfulness. Against Whom do we murmur when we grumble at the weather? What is the spirit which makes us wish to absorb anyone's affection? Is it not just the devil's parody of God's noblest gift to man, the Christian virtue of unselfish love? Is it not the green-eyed monster, Jealousy? Or the craving for praise, called by its right name,—is it not the grievous sin of Envy? In any case, and always, grumbling is rebelling against God's Will for us, as He shows it in the little circumstances of our daily life; and it is a *sin* that can only be conquered by humbly recognising its guilt, and bravely striving, with watchful prayer, to check the first rising thought of discontent, and to cultivate instead the spirit of thankfulness for the thousand undeserved blessings He sends us.

"Some murmur when their sky is clear
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue;
And some with thankful joy are filled,
If but one streak of light,
One ray of GOD's good mercy, gild
The darkness of their night."

TO THE SCHOOL, ON THE DEATHS OF QUEEN
VICTORIA AND OF BISHOP CREIGHTON.*March 1901.*

MY DEAR CHILDREN,—Just fifty years ago, in March 1851, the young Poet Laureate wrote his lines of graceful homage to the “revered, beloved” Victoria, from whose hand he had received

“This laurel greener from the brow
Of him who uttered nothing base,”

and after this delicate little tribute to Wordsworth, he passes, with the prophetic insight of the true poet, to forecast a future in which the “children of our children” shall say

“A thousand claims to reverence closed
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen.”

And now that prophecy is amply fulfilled, and every heart is so full of the thought of our “revered, beloved” Queen that it is difficult to turn them elsewhere; the whole world is feeling poorer for the loss which to us English folk is a deep personal sorrow, renewed with a little stab of pain each time that the dear and long accustomed sound of the words “our most gracious Sovereign Lady, Queen Victoria” have to be changed in our Church services. It could not be otherwise; for although the most eloquent lips have spoken, and the most powerful pens have written of her, there has not been one word which could go beyond the simple truth, in trying to express what she has been to her people.

And this year has brought another grievous loss to the Church on earth generally, and to us in Worcester specially, in the death of Bishop Creighton, who, though called to the most anxious and absorbing work elsewhere, never lost his interest in Worcester and in the High School. The world will remember him and revere his memory as true historian, great bishop, wise administrator, far-sighted statesman; all this he was, but we knew something more winning still, in his unfailing and affectionate sympathy; and we feel that life here has lost some of its zest, now that he has passed to that further side whence no expression of that sympathy can reach us any more at all. All this must sadden us, and yet,

for us, there is something deeper, stronger, more far-reaching than sorrow as we think of saintly lives that have passed into a higher stage. Even at that bitterest moment when we lay our loved ones out of our sight, our Church teaches us to say "we give THEE hearty thanks," and at every Eucharist,— "we bless Thy Holy Name for all Thy servants departed this life in Thy faith and fear."

And have we not cause for unspeakable thankfulness for God's good gift to England of such a Queen, and for His mercy in sparing her to rule us for so long that she has had time to make a noble tradition which has raised the standard of royal goodness for all the world and for all time?

Must we not be thankful also that there has been, to the very end, no one jarring chord in the harmony of a life perfectly attuned to the great key-notes of Love and Duty; no painful failing, no lengthened suffering, but all perfectly befitting the great Queen and good woman, whom "God's Love" has "set again" at the side of her husband?

And is it not even some ray of comfort in the sorrow of those whose dear ones have laid down their lives for their Queen, that they are with her now, where a greater than she, her King and theirs, crowns each true and dutiful life with the "Well done, good and faithful servant"?

If this be so, and if thankfulness will abide, when, as years pass on, grief will fade, there is one way of expressing this gratitude now, and of keeping the memory of our Queen as a living force; that is, striving in our humble round of daily work and responsibility to follow the example of conscientious, of selfless devotion to duty, of gentle, loving sympathy, of transparent truthfulness and sincerity, which have made Victoria the most womanly of women, as well as the most queenly of queens.—I am, dear children, ever your affectionate

ALICE OTTLEY.

P.S.—Old Girls who remember the Bishop of Truro [Dr. Gott], will like to read his message in a letter I recently received from him: "Your school was the greenest spot to me in my Worcester life; it renewed my youth and hope which had been worn thin in my dear Leeds. If any whom I prepared for Confirmation are in any way with you, please give them my loving blessing."

TO THE GUILD, ON SUNDAY.

HIGH SCHOOL,
Sunday next before Advent, 1903.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,—On this, the last of the Church's annual sequence of Sundays, it seems to me that we, whose Guild exists primarily for promoting holiness of life, should do well to think of the subject which is causing grave anxiety to all who love their country, and believe that her happiness, her greatness, depend upon her faithfulness to God; I mean the right observance of Sunday.

Probably many of you who are parents are feeling the difficulty of making the day in your own homes the holy and happy day that it used to be, because times have so changed that it hardly seems possible to continue the old traditions. But we have to remember that the consecration of one day in seven was not a mere Jewish ordinance; it was coeval with the Creation, and is binding for all time, and upon the whole human race; the Fourth Commandment only defines practically the great universal principle; and when with Our Lord's Resurrection the first day of the week was marked with a new name as the Lord's Day, a new element of greater sanctity was introduced into it; it is no longer *merely* rest, it is worship and service; *i.e.* it is cessation of ordinary toil, that we may be free to realise our highest life: that spiritual life which is apt to be overborne in the rush of daily work and pleasure. Rest, Worship, Service—these are the notes to which the Christian Sunday is to be attuned; how can we each practically carry them out in our own life and home? (1) *Rest*, not a selfish "abundance of idleness," but an honest putting away of week-day work, week-day books, week-day amusements, of everything out of tune with the higher note of spirituality struck for us by the Eucharistic service, which has been from the first days of the Church the characteristic of the "first day of the week."

We all long to see it restored as a day distinguished in every respect from the other six; the more it *differs* from other days, the greater will be its recuperative value, and this is one aspect of it which our LORD emphasizes when He says, "The Sabbath was made for man." It is well to put

aside the books, the music, the occupations of the week-days, and to have distinctly Sunday books, Sunday music, Sunday pleasures, calm, quiet, spiritualised, helping to lift us to holier things—to emphasize that in a very real sense this is the Lord's own day.

In these days there is a rich abundance of books which, just because they are such as raise our thoughts out of the ruts of workaday life, are far more refreshing and bracing to the world-weary mind than any novel or newspaper. And besides, as a thoughtful and practical writer¹ has said, "This is plain, that if the week-day books are to be read on a Sunday, the Sunday books will be read not at all." So with music; not such as tends to sensuous enjoyment or intellectual delight, but such as leads us Godwards, should be the music in a Christian household on Sunday. And here we touch on the question of Sunday pleasures, which is the real difficulty in an age passionately given to amusement and excitement. There are many enjoyments, not wrong in themselves, but which we are bound to forgo on Sunday, either because they entail labour on others, which is wronging our neighbour of his just rights, or because they are exciting, absorbing, appealing to the senses, unfitting us for that which is the special occupation of Sunday—worship.

There are many forms of pleasure permissible on Sunday to the under-educated, overworked, labouring classes, for which those in easy circumstances have no excuse. Again, those whose life is spent in the slums of great cities may well seek, on the only possible day for them, the fresh air and beautiful scenes of the country; but this is not a reason for the wealthy man to fill his house with self-indulgent idlers, for whom his servants must work, while they amuse themselves and ignore God on His own Holy Day.

(2) But whatever we may conscientiously allow in the way of quiet enjoyment, nothing must prevent our fulfilling the primary duty of worship which every creature owes to his Creator. Of course, before all, the highest of all such acts possible to us, is Holy Communion; but if that be the first, it certainly is not implied that we can discharge our religious obligations in one early morning hour; "on the contrary, our Communion pledges us to much devotion." Earnest

¹ The Rev. W. Allen Whitworth.

hearts in foreign countries have admired and have envied us our English Sunday ; they have lost its spirit largely through the teaching of the Roman Church, that an early morning mass sufficed for the day's worship ; shall we be fatuous enough to imitate them in this ?

(3) But our Lord by His example, as well as in word, introduced an element into the keeping of His new Sabbath which was wholly lacking in the Jewish conception of its obligations, when He said, " It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day," and wrought His most notable miracles of mercy on that day.

The service of others: this is an employment wholly in keeping with the Christian ideal of a holy day, and for this, what abundant opportunity we have. The sick, the aged, the lonely, the sad,—these are around us everywhere, and in ministering to them, we do it " unto Him." And everywhere also are His little ones: in the home, where it is all important that the earliest memories of Sunday should be both holy and happy, and in the Sunday School, where the clergy are always asking for more helpers. This appears to me exactly the work that Guild girls can and ought to undertake ; I know it involves real sacrifice if it is to be done well and heartily, as to the Lord, but it brings the joy of sacrifice and an immense reflex blessing on her who patiently, conscientiously prepares her teaching beforehand, and persistently and regularly, unhindered by weather and never yielding to disinclination, is punctually in her place Sunday by Sunday.

Surely hers is the response to the question, " Lovest thou Me ? " " Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee," with its crowning reward in the command, " Feed My lambs."

TO THE GUILD, ON THE BIBLE.

(1904)

MY DEAR CHILDREN,—I imagine that many of you will have heard, on Sunday, March 6, very much that is interesting about that marvellous collection of literature—poetry, history, biography, narrative, prophecy, forms of devotion, legal enactments, moral precepts, letters to persons and to communities, &c., every kind of composition, which together constitute that which we call to-day *the Bible*, which the

Holy Spirit of God has used through all the ages as the vehicle to express Divine truth, to convey through human language the gradual revelation which God has been pleased to make of Himself to man. Merely as literature it is incomparably the most wonderful collection of books in the world, and the questions that arise from a study of it are supremely interesting from a purely literary, historical and archæological point of view; nor need we fear that any research will lessen our reverence and love for that which, whatever its form, is the Word of God.

One of the most learned and thoughtful writers on the Old Testament truly says, "Criticism, in the hands of Christian scholars, does not banish or destroy the inspiration of the Old Testament, *it presupposes it*; it seeks only to determine the conditions under which it operates, and the literary forms through which it manifests itself; and it thus helps us to frame truer conceptions of the methods which it has pleased God to employ in revealing Himself to His ancient people of Israel, and in preparing the way for a fuller manifestation of Himself in Christ Jesus."

But, however keen the intellectual interest of these cognate studies, they are only subsidiary; they cannot explain why these particular books, even when but a very few of them existed, could call forth the passionate love of David and other Psalmists;—why they have appealed to millions of men, women, and children of nations the most cultured and the half barbarous, diverse as the Chinese, the African, the South Sea Islander, as well as to the European or the American;—why they are read now in 370 different languages, many of which had never been written at all until the demand for a translation of the Bible arose.

There is *no* explanation except that it is Divine, and that man recognises in it that which meets his deepest needs, his highest aspirations, which supplies the only clue to the difficulties of life here, which throws the only light on the great future beyond it, laying down the principles which alone can guide aright the government of nations or the daily life of each individual. It is not by argument that we are convinced that the Bible is the very Word of God; it is by the cumulative evidence of thousands who have felt its power of "discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart," of touching its

hidden springs, and clothing in language that is adequate, its fears, hopes, longings, and above all its devotion.

But to us the practical question is, "how are we personally using this great gift of God?" No amount of reading books about the Bible, or even sermons and commentaries upon it, will ever take the place of studying devoutly the Book itself, and I fear there is less of this in England than there was fifty years ago; perhaps the hurry of life is telling here, as elsewhere, dangerously; if so, would it not be well, this Lent, to make a steadfast resolve to begin afresh, to set aside a definite time—say, a quarter of an hour in the early morning—and to read a few verses on our knees, asking from the Holy Spirit of wisdom and knowledge His guidance, and expecting to find in them something which is His teaching to ourselves, upon which we can make some act of faith, hope, love, penitence, thankfulness, or some resolve which shall abide with us through the day?

I believe the initial difficulty to many is that of choosing what part to read: the Psalms and Lessons are too long for this particular purpose; the Gospel and Epistle, perhaps, too short for a whole week; and also, probably, many of us used those in earlier days, and want some other course of reading. Still the Church is our best and safest Guide, for we must never forget that it is through Her that God has given us the Bible; by Her authority alone we know which are the canonical books; and Her sequence of teaching through the year in Lessons, Epistles, and Gospels covers all the points of Christian doctrine and practice.

There are now published several sequences of passages thoughtfully chosen and arranged to follow the course of the Church's year, with a few words of guidance as to the main thoughts for meditation.

Such an one is *The Churchman's Union for Daily Devotional Bible Study*, under the direction of the Rev. C. H. Sharpe, Mission College, Gloucester,¹ who will send all particulars for a penny stamp.

Another is *Bible Study Notes* of the London Diocesan Church Reading Union, of which the secretary is Mrs. Horace Porter, 16 Russell Square, London, W.C.

The *Layman's Bible* is an excellent series of small volumes

¹ Now Warden of More Hall, near Stroud, Glos.

(each containing one book of the New Testament), now being published by Mowbray, at 1s. each.

The question of bringing up children in the habit of loving and reading the Bible is immensely important, but too large to enter upon, and perhaps each mother can best think it out for her own little ones as well as for her household ; Bible stories simply told, Bible pictures carefully explained, never lose their charm ; for rather older children there is a delightful little 1s. book, published by Mowbray, *Our Saviour*, the life of our Lord in Scripture words ; but undoubtedly there should be the daily family Bible reading, which familiarises all with the words and thoughts which unconsciously grow to be a part of their mental and spiritual possession ; as the constant reading of the Psalms provides them with forms of expression in their devotional life more perfect than any others can be, for these were directly inspired by the Holy Ghost, and with all reverence we may say, were used by our Lord Himself for praise and prayer.—Ever your affectionate

ALICE OTTLEY.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY OF THE HOLY NAME.

WORCESTER, *March 1904.*

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—After the Retreat at Bramley, we had a short discussion as to the best means of training children in the daily reading and the devotional study of the Bible, and I think that, for the large majority (alas !) of our members who were not able to be there, it may be helpful to summarise the suggestions which were made at the time, or which have reached us since, on what we all feel to be both an important and a difficult subject.

I should be inclined to emphasize the distinction between (1) the daily Reading, (2) the Learning, and (3) the Devotional use of Holy Scripture. I mean that the few verses read, kneeling, as part of private prayer, are not sufficient for gaining the broad knowledge of the Bible, and catching the general tone which affects the outlook on life, and inculcates the great principles of other-worldliness in domestic, social, political, and national life, which, in spite

of exaggerations and distortions, made the strength of the Puritan rule. Therefore I should strongly press the reading of the daily Lessons, especially the Old Testament Lessons, wherever possible, not as a school subject, but as part of the family life, whether at home, or in a boarding-school, or in a boarding-house attached to a day-school, as we must, I fear, face the fact that, during schoolroom days, daily matins and evensong are next to impossible.

In connexion with this is the important point of taking the Bible to Church and following carefully the reading of the Lessons. Then there is the Sunday, when surely time should be found for some Bible instruction in the family; many of us must have known the enthusiastic interest of each child finding texts on some special subjects and then reading them together, and gathering from them the particular teaching of each passage. For little children, pictures or the imaginary picture-story, to which they put the names; for older ones, names of places to which they shall put incidents; virtues or faults of which they shall find instances; but it would be endless to enumerate the various incentives to searching the Bible that can be used. Of course reverence must be jealously guarded, but this can easily be done by the teacher herself insisting on the reverent handling of the Book; the slow and thoughtful manner of reading; (is it too minute a detail to say?) the separate sounding of the *-ed*, which is right in the English of the period when the Bible was being translated and the Prayer Book compiled, and now serves a good purpose in distinguishing them from other literature.

(2) The learning by heart of the very words of Scripture hardly needs insisting upon: its value must be so evident when we realise that the memory is the first developed of the faculties, and that to store it with the highest and holiest thoughts, in the most perfect language, is to lay up for middle life and old age the richest treasure the mind can possess.

(3) But beyond this, and more important still, is the devotional, personal use of the Bible, and it was upon this that we gathered at our Conference the most practical suggestions from several experienced teachers.

One Head-mistress of a boarding-school supplies her children with a printed scheme, every six weeks or so, with a

portion of Scripture for each day, and a little commentary to bring out its point, connected with the weekly lesson given in school ; but there is such an excellent scheme, on almost exactly the same lines, brought out under the auspices of the Central Society for Higher Religious Education, that it would seem economy of force rather to use this than to think out another. They are called *Lectiones*, and there are two series, for seniors and juniors respectively, arranged in accordance with the Church's seasons ; each series can be had at 6*d.* for a dozen copies, from Spottiswoode & Co., Eton College, Windsor, and all information will be given by the Rev. J. A. Cruikshank, Herga, Woking.

A similar scheme, with rather more help to meditation, is put forth by *The Churchman's Union for Daily Devotional Bible Study*, edited by the Rev. C. H. Sharpe. This has also a senior and junior series, for the confirmed and unconfirmed ; the readings and meditations are sent monthly, for 1*s.* a year for either series, or if there are fifty sent together, 9*d.*, or for 100, 6*d.* for each member.

Another Head-mistress gives her younger children a little 1*s.* book called *Our Saviour*, the life of our Lord in Bible words, published by Mowbray. Another recommends the London Diocesan Church Reading Union's *Bible Study Notes* ; secretary, Mrs. Horace Porter, 16 Russell Square, London, W.C.

Whatever scheme may be adopted or recommended, it behoves us to take care that each child has at least ten minutes or quarter-hour's quiet time for this special purpose, and then to teach her to throw herself definitely and expectantly upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to enable her to "inwardly digest," to take to herself personally, the teaching HE will give her in the Words HE has inspired.

It would indeed be a work worthy of our Society to re-awaken something of the deeper knowledge of, and truer love for, God's Holy Word, which has somehow diminished in England during the last half century.—I am, yours very sincerely,

ALICE OTTLEY.

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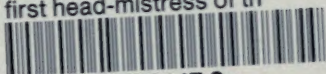


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